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ABSTRACT

This series of five booklets is intended to assist principals and teachers in Tasmania in planning a broad-based continuous program of speech and drama throughout primary and lower secondary classes. The material contained within the booklets has been arranged and presented to emphasize the basic concepts and skills which are inherent in a speech and drama program and which strongly support the development of both a language and an expressive arts program. Throughout the booklets the importance of the individuality of children and the building of relationships between people are major concerns together with the development of ideas, attitudes, and values which influence the quality and competency of communication skills. The five booklets are titled as follows: (1) An Introduction and Overview; (2) Expressive Movement; (3) Talking and Listening, Storybuilding and Telling; (4) Sound, Words, and Poetry; and (5) Drama. Each booklet gives examples of starting points and developments which have been carried out successfully in classroom situations. Each booklet also discusses aspects of planning and organization, and contains a list of suggested resources. (SR)

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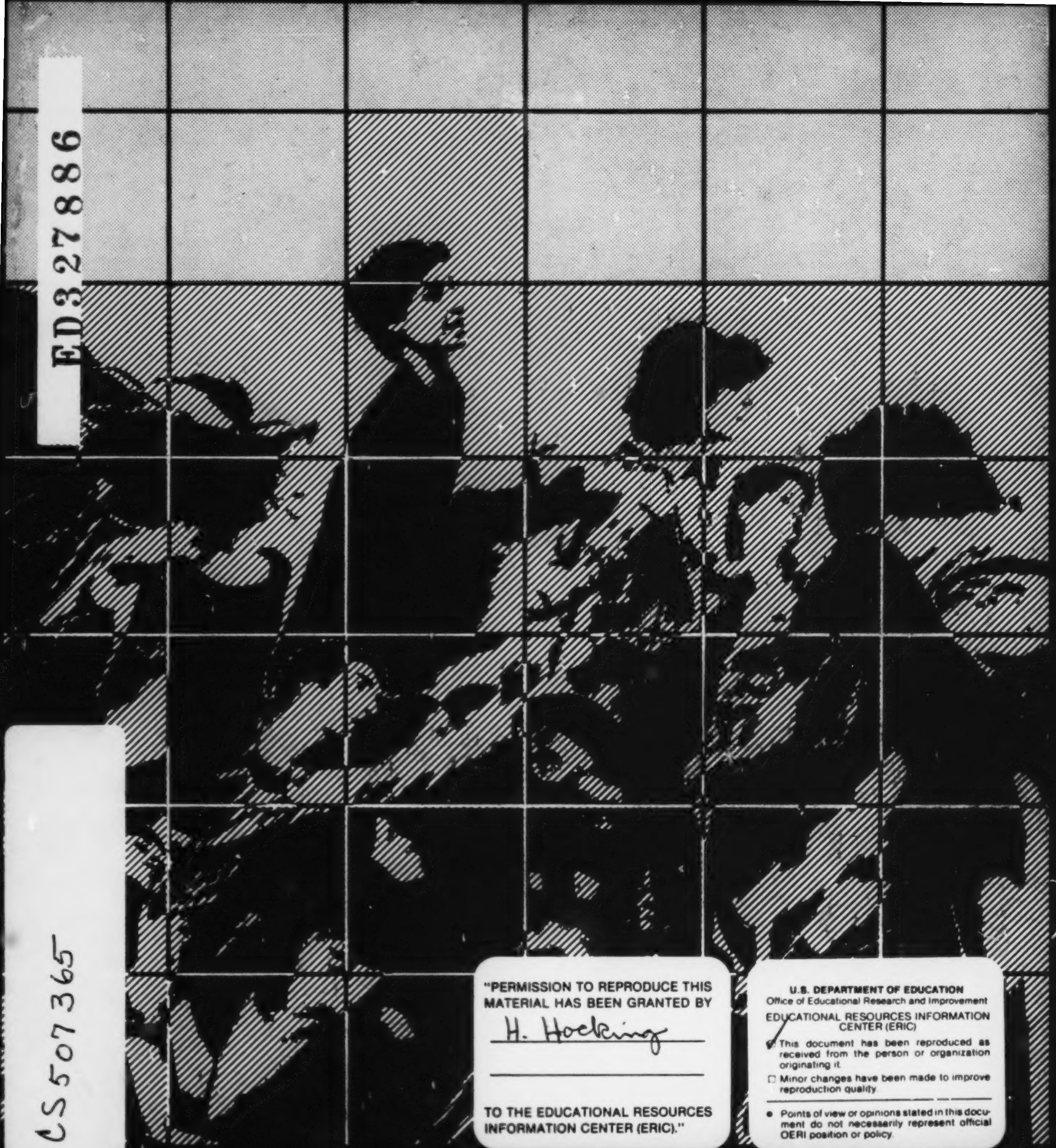

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a framework for speech and drama

AN INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Tasmania Media Centre, Education Department Hobart 1980

2

an introduction to speech and drama from kindergarten to lower secondary

The five supplementary booklets are entitled:

- An Introduction and Overview
- Talking and Listening. Storybuilding and telling
- Sound, Words and Poetry
- Drama
- Puppetry and Construction

Acknowledgement is made to the many teachers and their students who provided examples of work during the preparation of this booklet.

The material in this booklet has been prepared by
the Speech and Drama Centre, 73 Brisbane Street, Hobart, Tasmania
and produced by
the Division of Services, Education Department of Tasmania, Hobart.

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INTRODUCTION

The preparation of the *Framework for Speech and Drama* has arisen from a need expressed by many principals and teachers for a document which would assist them in planning a broadly-based continuous program of speech and drama throughout primary and lower secondary classes.

The material, contained within the six *Framework* booklets, has been arranged and presented to emphasise the basic concepts and skills which are inherent in a speech and drama program and which strongly support the development of both a language and an expressive arts program.

Throughout the booklets the importance of the individuality of children and the building of relationships between people are major concerns together with the development of ideas, attitudes and values which influence the quality and competency of communication skills.

While the aspect of appraisal has not been included as a specific segment in the *Framework* it is an important factor in gauging the effectiveness and success of any program presented to children. Within each of the supplementary booklets a foundation of basic principles and criteria has been outlined. This 'foundation' provides a framework from which teachers can begin exploring methods of appraising specific units of work. The drama booklet briefly mentions four points of view from which a teacher might consider appraisal of children's learning. It is planned that further trialling of methods of appraisal, based upon the principles and approaches outlined in the *Framework*, will be undertaken. The results of these trial projects will be made available to teachers as an addendum to the initial *Framework* booklets.

When using *A Framework for Speech and Drama* it is suggested that teachers begin with an aspect of speech and drama in which they feel confident and gradually extend the activities to include other areas. The sharing between teachers of ideas and outcomes related to children's work is both a valuable and satisfying part of any speech and drama program. We acknowledge the generosity of teachers who have shared the examples of children's work contained in these booklets and look forward to further developments and sharing in a growing number of schools.

The speech and drama advisory staff in all regions have worked in close collaboration to produce these working documents. In the compilation of the final draft we acknowledge the major contribution made by Megan Schaffner who has acted as editorial leader to the staff team. Throughout the project we have appreciated the assistance given to us by principals, teachers and colleagues who have discussed material and offered us their comments and suggestions.

– Beth Parsons
Supervisor
1980

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FOREWORD

It is important to understand the part a speech and drama program plays in children's learning, and to understand how language, attitudes and environment influence interaction within the classroom. These and other factors such as basic skills form the foundation of a continuous program throughout the school and are dealt with in the first section of this Framework.

The second section outlines the strands of a speech and drama program, and attempts to link the stages of progression within the strands to the general characteristics of children's development. The expectations or stages of progression are given in four stages: A, B, C and D and while not tied specifically to 'grades' or ages, they cover the development from kindergarten to lower secondary.

Each strand of the program is then considered independently in separate booklets, with examples of starting points and developments which have been carried out successfully within classroom situations. Each booklet contains aspects of planning, organisation and lists of suggested resources.

The five supplementary booklets are entitled:

- Expressive Movement
- Talking and Listening. Story-building and Telling
- Sounds, Words and Poetry
- Drama
- Construction and Puppetry.

CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATE IN A CONSISTENT PROGRAM OF SPEECH AND DRAMA

are

DISCOVERING THEMSELVES

- movement
- painting
- exploring sound
  - vocal and non-vocal
- exchange of ideas through talk

and

FORMING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

- movement
- language
- drama

EXPLORING THEIR ENVIRONMENT

- sensory experience
- movement
- painting
- sound making
- talking
- writing

ABSORBING THEIR EXPERIENCES

- drama
- making sounds
- talking
- stories and poems
- writing

and

FINDING THE LANGUAGE TO POSSESS THEM

- movement and verbal dynamics
- talking
- drama
- storytelling and puppetry
- literature

SPEECH AND DRAMA: A DEFINITION

Speech in the context of the 'Speech and Drama' program is concerned with both the everyday use of spoken language and also with the expressive use of speech in interpreting literature, making and telling stories and in using language in conjunction with other expressive media.

> *Speech is our chief means of expressing our thoughts and feelings, and of communicating with other people. The business of life depends upon it.* [1]

'The business of life' for children is to explore the widest range of possible uses for spoken language and to do this in a natural, lively and imaginative way. 'Speech' in this context does not mean promoting a particular accent or style of speech (nor is it associated with the corrective and clinical aspects of speech pathology). 'Speech' in this context means encouraging clear, expressive communication in a wide variety of situations and for many purposes.

Drama in school is concerned with children's capacity to put themselves imaginatively into someone else's situation and to express ideas and feelings in interactions with others in a variety of situations and contexts. In drama

> *. . . we depict what we think people and things are like, and we make sense of the world by these depictions of it.* [2]

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[1] Clive Sansom, *Communication in the Primary School*, p. 1

[2] Dorothy Heathcote, *The enabling teacher*, an interview with Radio New Zealand in 1978

Of particular value in encouraging children's language development are situations which develop from their play and 'pretends'. Such play and games are the simple beginnings from which drama evolved and still evolves. Now and in earlier times both 'play' and 'games' were used to describe drama and other entertainments. There is an ambiguity of meaning in these words 'play' and 'game', which reflects the idea of activity, both physical and emotional, and also the ideas of order and pretence. The order and structure of the 'game' or 'play' provides the boundaries which separate the make-believe action from the reality *'for which it is in some sense a substitute or preparation'.* [3] Drama therefore involves 're-creation' in its broadest sense.

As children play, their 'pretends' and games are both a substitute and a preparation for living in the world. Through their play, they come to terms with the past experiences, they adjust to the present and form expectations which they use to speculate about or predict future events. They do all this quite spontaneously, either alone or with others, through play, which involves talking and listening, moving, making, doing and 'being'.

The young child plays out or externalises what we as adults tend to do 'in our heads'. Not only does this action, this playing, mediate between the inner and outer life, but the development of an inner life is **dependent** upon this external action. In other words, as children use their bodies and all their senses to act upon and react to their environment and as they use objects, materials and their own bodies to symbolise meanings, they develop mental images and kinetic 'memories' which are the basis of imagination and from which intellect develops.

Research shows that concepts form later than percepts.

> *We do not realise how much of thought and action is guided by images, and this is responsible for the grand misunderstanding; namely, that image making and image perceiving – the imagination – can be left to develop without tuition, and that formal instruction is to be concentrated on skills of cognition and problem solving.*[4]

The materials which we use for image-making are the materials of the arts, the same materials which children explore and manipulate. Each of the arts has a unique contribution to make to the development of image-making, perceiving and the imagination; experience in one art form cannot be substituted, or make up for a lack of experience in another arts area; all are necessary. Although there are certain basic principles common to the arts, each is unique.

Children need a planned progression of experiences through each of the arts; they also need opportunities to work through a succession of arts media. As they move through one medium, for example, music or painting, they may not consciously be trying to express a particular meaning or idea, but they begin to discover possible meanings, and they also begin to make connections and to find similarities. As they work through a variety of media, their barely understood, half-formed thoughts become clearer to themselves. From these beginnings they progress to being able to use a medium with intention, i.e. to plan to express a certain meaning. Also, they develop a sense of the fitness of certain media to convey certain meanings more exactly and more effectively than others – they begin to see a 'goodness of fit' between the medium and the message.

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[3] Glynne Wickham, 'English Drama to 1660' in *Sphere History of Literature in the English Language,* Vol. 3, p. 20.

[4] Harry S. Broudy, 'Arts Education: Necessary or Just Nice?' in *Phi Delta Kappan,* January 1979. p. 348.

As they work through a succession of media, children develop an awareness of certain features relating to form, such as climax and sequencing, and they begin to see that certain combinations of elements can convey certain emotions, moods or atmospheres. For example, they may discover that certain rhythms and body movements create a feeling of joy, or that strong, sudden movements convey a feeling of anger. It is at this stage that experience with and through the arts usually leads to an interest about the arts.

The interplay between these two aspects, the doing and the learning about the arts, needs sensitive understanding in order to keep a balance. Learning about the arts cannot become a substitute for actual experience with the media of the arts, but it can become a valuable complementary study provided teachers recognise when and how to introduce information.

Throughout school years the rich experiences on which education is based, should include visits to concerts, theatres and art galleries, and visits to the school by musicians, actors, dancers and artists of many kinds. As well, there should be opportunities for children to share their own work in drama, poetry and movement with other children. These 'sharings' should not be formal pseudo-adult occasions in front of large audiences or under competitive conditions, but times of genuine exchange of work between children, with opportunities for discussion with one another and with sympathetic adults.

In discussing the fundamental nature of drama, Richard Courtney[5] has identified three basic stages of development between birth and adolescence, which form a useful way of looking at development, not only through and within drama, but also through the other arts; firstly, the child as **'actor'** or **'doer'**, next the child as **planner** of his actions, and thirdly, the child as **communicator**, concerned with conveying his meanings to others, and in turn receiving or 'reading' their meanings. This latter development may be evident in the later years of the primary school or in some cases not until the early secondary years.

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[5] Richard Courtney, Insea seminar on Drama curricula, Adelaide, 1978.

It is at this period that children will begin to recognise subtler relationships between their intentions and those of professional artists; they will be ready to learn about the arts as well as being eager to develop greater skills in using the tools and materials of the arts effectively. This eagerness for greater skill must be recognised and met, so that by the time children approach the often ruthlessly self-critical adolescent stage, they have acquired a competence they can recognise and appreciate; if they do not have this competence, they tend to deprecate their own work and reject the arts as channels of expression, denying themselves not only an important outlet for creative action, but also turning away from all the enriching possibilities which the arts present.

The arts, being concerned with all aspects of human potential and development, fulfil a unique role in education, in that they provide opportunities for creative action. For education to be effective, children need to develop a positive self-concept, the knowledge that they are valued, that they can succeed, that what they say, do and make is worthy of consideration. If they are dominated by feelings of failure, helplessness or dependence upon chance, their tendency will be to withdraw from the risky business of learning and frequently to find destructive channels for their frustrations. Where they can act constructively upon their environment, they will discover meaning in their world, and the excitement of learning.

SPEECH AND DRAMA IN LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

As children explore the various aspects of speech and drama they use language, thought, imagination, their bodies and various other materials to make meaning of life situations. It is the teacher's responsibility to extend the children beyond what they already know and to help them in this meaning-making process.

The writers of the Bullock Report make the following interesting statement:

> *Drama has an obvious and substantial contribution to make to the development of children's language and its possibilities in this respect have yet to be fully explored . . .*[6]

In 1977 Joan Tough's[7] research led her to the conclusion that the two most important kinds of experiences for thought and language development are:

- opportunities to talk with interested and concerned adults who will respect, listen and respond to children's ideas
- opportunities for imaginative play and drama.

The speech and drama activities discussed in this Framework provide for a variety of language uses within various contexts including imaginative drama situations. These in turn provide opportunities to reflect upon and discuss events, outcomes and implications discovered during the playing out of particular situations and the assumption of various roles.

Within the various contexts suggested in this Framework, children will have opportunities to use oral language for many purposes: for example:

- to recall and describe past events and experiences
- to reason about present and recalled experiences
- to anticipate possible future events and predict outcomes
- to identify problems and offer solutions to them
- to plan and survey alternative courses of action
- to project into the experience and feelings of others
- to build up scenes and descriptions imaginatively
- to demonstrate
- to instruct
- to report
- to label, identify and classify
- to elaborate detail
- to reflect on past experiences and their meanings
- to justify
- to threaten
- to criticise
- to joke and tease.

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[6] Bullock Report, *A Language for Life*, H.M.S.O. 1975. p. 156

[7] Joan Tough, *The Development of Meaning;* a study of children's use of language, Allen and Unwin, 1977.

SECTION 1

SPEECH AND DRAMA: A FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNICATION

Speech and drama form a vital part of a total arts program and need to be considered in terms of a continuous sequence of experience throughout the child's school years. Speech and drama activities include:

- talking in a wide variety of contexts and for many different purposes
- developing social skills as children and teachers learn to co-operate and share with one another, and as they learn to consider and trust one another
- listening to, telling and making stories and poems
- learning to use movement and language expressively
- using drama as a learning medium extending into an art form
- exploring and sequencing words and sounds
- making and using puppets and constructions.

These activities will develop from a wide variety of starting points, some of which should be direct sensory experiences, as children are led to look more closely at the world around them and to consider their own feelings and those of others. Other starting points will be from indirect experiences such as a shared story, another area of the curriculum or a spontaneous happening that has caught their interest.

Before planning a school program it is necessary to ask the question:
WHY include speech and drama in the program?

- Speech and drama is concerned with helping children build a positive SELF IMAGE, and to further their ability to develop RELATIONSHIPS with people and their general environment.
- In this respect we therefore need to consider the discovery, release and development of INDIVIDUAL RESOURCES: such resources as the powers of concentration and the vocal, physical, emotional, sensory, intellectual and imaginative aspects of personal development.
- The discovery and growth of personal resources take place within the context of children's ENVIRONMENT, enabling them to develop their relationship with people, places and objects within the range of their own experience, both real and imaginary. It is possible that the school environment may need to compensate for any lack of opportunities for rich personal experience outside the school program.
- Children make MEANING out of EXPERIENCES through the use of movement, art (painting, drawing, construction), 'pretend' dramatic play, language (speaking and later, writing), music (sounds and rhythms). Children absorb their experiences as they work through the materials of the arts. They require TIME to internalise their experience, to reflect upon it. They do this, not in a vacuum, but while they work through the media of expression.

- The most potent way by which children make meaning from their experiences is through language, and particularly through talk. Oral language is a vital part of speech and drama activities.
- Children make and discover MEANING as they select, order, reorder and state what has been important to them. This process of exploration into meaning reveals to themselves and to others, their level of understanding and knowledge in their own terms.
- Children's 'statements' in the expressive arts are the beginning of sequencing that lead to understanding form and structure, which are relevant to all areas of learning.
- The speech and drama program offers children opportunities to develop their ability to adjust to SOCIAL demands. A social situation can be a very real challenge for children; one where they need to retain a positive image of themselves while contributing with confidence to the situation. The image they have of themselves comes initially from their home and family background and is later modified by their experiences at school. Without a good relationship between individuals within the class, including the teacher, there is little chance of the socially unsure child fully benefitting from the teacher's well-planned and well-intentioned program of work.

The suggestions for activities given in this Framework are in the nature of structures and strategies which the children and teacher together will adapt to their own ideas. The actual content and material, therefore, is dependent on the children, their stage of development, their interests and the teacher's knowledge of, and sensitivity to the children.

THE CONTEXT WITHIN WHICH SPEECH AND DRAMA ACTIVITIES HAPPEN

THE ENVIRONMENT WE PROVIDE CAN, EITHER HAMPER OR PROMOTE LEARNING

The effect of environment on children's development and learning in all areas of the curriculum and on their perception of values and attitudes, needs to be given particular attention.

Whatever the school environment, its message to each one of the children is clear – either it is a welcoming, caring place where they can approach interested adults who will take time to listen to them, or it is a place they come to dislike because there appears to be little time for them as individuals. It is in the welcoming, caring environment that they will be able to learn and to develop their own resources.

An encouraging environment is essentially one which includes people, activities, materials and objects that will stimulate curiosity and interest and so provide motivation for learning.

Such an environment will include:

(a) a warm accepting attitude by the teacher and other helping adults;
(b) a variety of materials for construction, modelling, painting, printing and other forms of the visual arts, puppetry etc. and materials and instruments for making sound;
(c) sufficient space to carry out activities such as drama, movement and painting;
(d) focal points such as displays, natural objects, live specimens, e.g. fish tank, ant or worm farms;
(e) a variety of interesting books and records;
(f) a variety of visitors to the classroom, adults and children;
(g) excursions and outings carefully planned to arouse curiosity and interest.

Of these factors, the most important is the teacher's attitude of acceptance, recognition that:

- each child's experience is different and worth talking about;
- each child's language experience in and out of school is different and must be fostered, using the language the child has as a basis for further development;
- each child needs to experience success and encouragement in order to develop a positive self-image.

The teacher's attitude and language use

- The teacher's own use of language and his or her attitude to the children's language is vitally important. The teacher's speech is of primary importance because of its influence on the children's language use. By our warm and accepting attitude, by genuinely listening to what children are saying we discover their interests, concerns, fears, hopes and needs. This discovery provides us with a basis on which to build an enriching language program. By our responses, by our contribution to the conversation we can 'model' and introduce new vocabulary and ideas, we can help children to see or make connections between ideas or attitudes. In this way we can extend their vocabulary and influence their style of expression without resorting to damaging rejection of what they are saying, rejection which they may interpret as rejection of themselves. We need to accept and build on the language and interests that children bring to school.

The teacher helps the children's learning not only by the situation or task he or she sets up, but also by sympathetic and probing statements and questions which will require children to represent to themselves what they already know and how they know it, and to consider possible strategies in dealing with the problem once they have identified it. This can lead the children to speculate, to wonder 'what if . . .' and to develop expectations of what is likely to happen next in various situations. Their perceptions of what does happen are partly shaped by their expectations which colour their interpretation of any situation.

Questioning which invites no more than a superficial answer and which appears to the children to be an invitation to join in a guessing game to find out certain ready-made answers which are in the teacher's mind, discourages the more worthwhile and hypothetical mode of thinking and talking. Children who experience this type of questioning tend to move towards a mode of closed assertions which they think are right or wrong, and aim at answers which will win the teacher's approval. Questions which lead to this kind of answer sometimes occur because of the teacher's failure to project him or herself into the children's viewpoint.

Questioning should invite tentative answers which lead in turn to further thinking; questions should help children to focus on some aspect previously overlooked, or help them to make new connections and gain fresh insights. Within the area of drama, for instance, questioning is one of the teacher's most valuable tools in helping children to see the implications of an action they have made or a decision they have taken.

Part of the teacher's responsibility in this area is to help children formulate their own questions which will lead to their reflecting on what they are doing.

Rich experiences

In structuring a program, consideration needs to be given to the balance of direct and indirect experiences. Direct experiences are often preferable, e.g. to examine real tadpoles caught on an excursion and brought back to school would probably be preferable to watching a television program about pond life, but not all direct experiences are useful, desirable or even possible. The intensity of some experiences may be conveyed more appropriately through a story, a film or a theatrical performance. Experiences and other starting points for speech and drama work, may come from or be linked to other areas of study.

The Context within which Speech and Drama Activities Happen

Direct experiences include:

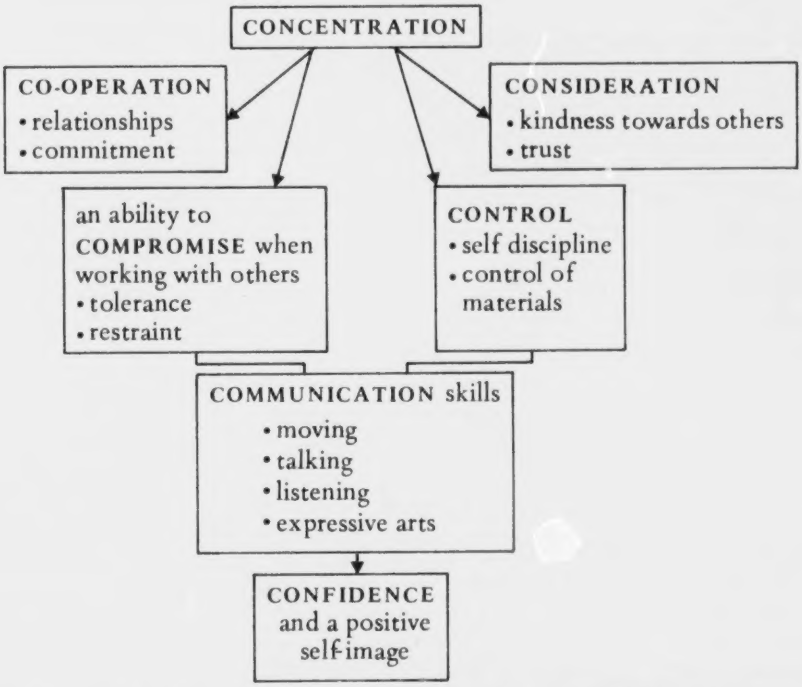
Sensory experiences, related to
- objects, creatures and materials brought into the classroom by children or teachers
- excursions
- movement or sound sequencing
- displays of objects
- visits to people and places outside the school including concerts and theatres
- visitors to the school

Indirect experiences include:
- stories and poems – told and read (including story making)
- films and television
- other areas of the curriculum, e.g.
  - science or maths
  - art
  - music
  - social science
  - news items.

As well as planned starting points, we need to be aware of the possibilities of using spontaneous happenings in the classroom and school grounds. These can often lead children to extend their understanding of people, situations or even their own sense of fun or compassion. For example, on one occasion, a bowl of brine shrimps was accidently spilt and this incident led to a closer observation of the shrimps and a discussion on reactions to accidents, dangers and survival. The handling of the situation directed attention away from the individual involved in the accident, and onto an interesting aspect of the event which was explored further through movement and drama.

SOCIAL HEALTH

Basic to all areas of the curriculum, and particularly to speech and drama, is the social health of the group.


CONCENTRATION
CO-OPERATION
• relationships
• commitment
CONSIDERATION
• kindness towards others
• trust
an ability to COMPROMISE when working with others
• tolerance
• restraint
CONTROL
• self discipline
• control of materials
COMMUNICATION skills
• moving
• talking
• listening
• expressive arts
CONFIDENCE and a positive self-image

The social skills developed through speech and drama activities are life skills that children need to develop and understand in their own way as they grow towards new levels of intellectual and physical achievement. These same social skills lead to positive, purposeful decision-making, to commitment, and to being able to take responsibility for personal action. Social health, therefore, is central to the child's social, emotional and cognitive development.

The activities involved in speech and drama therefore underpin and support all the work carried out in the general educational program.

We need to help each child to accept responsibility for his or her own behaviour, and emphasise the importance of each person's contribution to the social health of the group. This is done with regard to the level of understanding and the stage of development of the child. The responsibility for control is therefore **shared** by the teacher and the children, rather than being vested totally in the teacher.

The teacher needs to be able to assess the social health of the class, that is, the degree of co-operation, mutual consideration and trust present within the group, to what extent students are able to work together, their willingness to share materials, ideas and working space, and the level of concentration achieved. Many aspects of the speech and drama program are aimed directly at developing and reinforcing the social health of the group, because not only does a lack of these skills hamper more advanced work in drama and all other areas of the curriculum but it also precludes the development of a good self-image and the establishment of satisfying personal relationships.

EXPECTATIONS

Most teachers know instinctively that the teacher's expectations of each child have an unmistakable effect on the child's performance, learning capacity and behaviour. (If our expectations are that Scott will probably be as difficult as his sister Wendy was last year, and that we will need to be on guard to deal with his trouble-making propensity, then this attitude will communicate distrust to this child, and his reaction in all probability will be to fulfil the expectations.) This phenomenon is now well known and proved by considerable research and experiment, that children in our care are particularly affected by our attitudes towards them, and that whether we like it or not, we communicate like or dislike, trust or distrust, coolness or warmth to others through our non-verbal behaviour, our tones and manner of speech, eye contact, or lack of it and in a host of other ways of which we are barely conscious. As teachers, our attitude to and our expectation of the children are of vital importance.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

A balanced program of speech and drama activities will help to extend and refine the skills of communication.

- Moving
- Talking
- Listening
- Making symbols i.e. exploring all the possibilities of making and communicating meanings through expressive media e.g. sound, images, writing, etc.

Communication skills are *life skills* and therefore form a *basic* element in any well-planned total educational program.

(a) **Moving**

Movement is a basic physical experience which forms part of everyday existence. In addition to the normal physical activity involved in carrying out tasks of daily living, there is also the expressive side of movement which relates directly to emotions, thought processes and sensory responses.

- Movement enables children to recognise the potential of their physical efforts as a means of expressing feelings. Feelings and action energise thought. In this respect movement helps to clarify thought processes and forms a basis for extending verbal language.
- Verbal dynamics or words-in-action give opportunities to increase vocabulary and sensitivity towards the texture of language.
- Where there are learning or emotional difficulties movement can help the child to experience a sense of achievement.
- Expressive movement also leads children to an understanding of relationships, sequence and form which reinforce their understanding of structure in other areas of communication e.g. music, art, literature and dance.

(b) **Talking**

While children handle materials and objects, they talk to one another, or to themselves, planning, speculating, predicting, solving problems or making rules, observing and wondering about what they do, see and hear. Our aim as teachers is to help children to find the means to express their meaning clearly and unmistakably, and to give, or seize upon opportunities for talk which will promote growth and understanding.

Language is rooted in situation, and every situation will produce differences of language, both verbal and non-verbal. Children need opportunities to converse with a wide variety of people. Visitors to the classroom can provide a stimulus and interest which will widen children's language use.

In structuring opportunities for talk, the teacher needs to provide a context or make use of the many possible contexts (interests, objects, excitements, relationships) that already exist in the classroom, so that language is used for a variety of purposes to extend and deepen meaning.

A rich and varied language program needs to include the language of poetry and stories, both read and told by the teacher. Opportunities should also be provided for children to speak poems they and others have written and to tell stories they have made. The quality of their interpretative work will depend on their developing interest in language, their curiosity about words and about the world they live in, their feelings and ideas. Such an interest will depend on their powers of discrimination, their sensory awareness of their world and themselves, and their understanding of words, what they can do and what they mean.

(c) Listening

By far the biggest communication difficulty in any group is that of listening – we seldom really listen or concentrate on listening to one another. Any really productive conversation will depend on our willingness to give one another a sympathetic hearing. Besides being the person who arranges or structures a situation which will promote learning in the classroom, the teacher is also the person whose example the children copy very closely. Good listening in any classroom begins with the teacher – is he or she a good listener? Being a good listener involves willingness to give attention to the speaker and to show by our response that we are giving serious consideration to what is being said. Such giving of attention does not involve 'putting on a performance' of sympathetic listening, but it does involve being a genuinely caring person with concern for the children's welfare. Children who realise that the teacher is an attentive listener will learn to listen more attentively to one another.

Children also need opportunities to develop activities for which they help to devise the rules and where they learn to listen to one another. Initially it may be useful to suggest activities where recall is crucial, so that the children become aware of the need for attentive listening to one another. Attentive listening is not likely to develop in a classroom where the teacher does most of the talking and the children are expected to do most of the listening.

We need also to use the opportunities which arise to draw children's attention to sounds around them, to help them to discriminate between sounds, to classify and compare sounds. This leads to making sound sequences, using vocal and body sounds, sounds made with objects in their environment and with musical instruments. As they are led to explore sound they will begin to listen with more attention and discrimination.

(d) Making symbols – the expressive arts

Children explore and experiment with vocal sounds, with rhythms and actions they can make with their bodies, and with objects in order that they may come to know them and use them for their own purposes. Their interaction with people, as with objects, sounds, and actions, enable them to manipulate, experiment and play with their own modes of expression. Playing and manipulating form the basis from which all modes of expression develop and therefore children at all ages and stages in their development need access to a wide variety of materials to express their thoughts and feelings in various forms.

By making or using one thing to represent another, they are using a symbol and beginning to make the connections which will later enable them to develop abstract thinking processes. Before they are able to develop the complexities of a spoken language they will express themselves in a remarkable range of bodily movements and social 'noises'. Before they master the complicated code system of written language they may express themselves through constructional and later through pictorial symbols that are more accessible to them, that is, through paint, through drawings, through collage etc. Even when children have mastered the more complicated codes of written language and mathematics, it is necessary for them to continue to develop their skills in the symbolic systems of the expressive arts. Through the materials of the arts, children can find a channel for their energies, their intellect, their emotions and sensory perceptions, as they concentrate on making, moulding or manipulating these materials, to say something they may be quite unable or unwilling to express in words. They also need opportunities to play and experiment with words. We need to recognise this factor of experimenting and exploring in all that children make, do, paint or say, and to realise how easily we can cut off further attempts in any medium of expression by receiving the products of this process unsympathetically or with a lack of discernment. By understanding the process we are able to help children to take the next step towards finding form and clarity of expression, to think and speculate about the materials they are using and to reflect on what they are trying to say. It is necessary for the child to continue to explore all aspects of the arts:

- painting and many forms of the visual arts
- drama and dance
- music and making sound sequences
- writing and the interpretation of literature.

It is important for the teacher to understand the value of continued exploration and experimentation.

In all forms of communication the child (and the adult) is involved in sequencing – that is, selecting and connecting components to make or find a satisfying form or structure.

Form and structure begin with placing two thoughts or ideas in sequence; it may begin earlier with the repetition of a single idea – possibly a rhythmic pattern of sound or movement which creates its own form.

Through all the work done in speech and drama, as well as in other areas, teachers can help children to become aware of and to use aspects of form, such as:

- climax
- contrast
- repetition and patterning
- phrasing
- use of pause and stillness
- pace
- a sense of conclusion or resolution.

The ability to sequence ideas and other elements such as words, movements or sounds, depends to some extent on memory. Children need opportunities to develop the ability to recall and repeat sequences they have devised.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Essential for speech and drama activities is sufficient space where movement and drama can take place without interrupting or distracting others, or being distracted by others. The floor surface should be suitable for children to work on it in bare feet, that is, it must be neither splintery nor too highly polished and slippery. Portable rostra blocks of varying sizes are most useful and can be used to create different floor levels or they can become a boat, a house, a throne, etc. as necessary. Some teachers find a dressing-up box useful, whereas others prefer to collect a stock of pieces of material which can be used in a variety of ways. Percussion instruments should be readily available and tape recorders are most useful both for the teacher's use and the children's.

In units where there is no withdrawal area for drama or movement the teachers face very real challenges in matters of organisation and co-operative planning. Insufficient activity space in older schools poses challenges of a different kind. In both these extremes of 'working space' teachers usually find ways to accommodate the best form of compromise available to them.

RELATEDNESS OF ALL THE STRANDS OF SPEECH AND DRAMA

This Framework describes strategies and methods of working within each of the strands of speech and drama:

- Expressive movement and verbal dynamics
- Talking, listening and story-building
- Sounds, words and poetry
- Drama
- Construction and puppetry.

However, it is important to realise that all strands are inter-related and that many of the speech and drama activities described may incorporate aspects of several strands during one session. The approach is essentially a holistic and not a fragmented one, but for ease of reference it has been dealt with strand by strand to enable teachers to develop the skills and strategies necessary.

All the strands can lead into or from other areas of the arts and the total curriculum.

TIME TO GROW

We need to keep before us the thought that we are dealing with human beings who need to grow through having:

- time and opportunity to experience and explore
- time to wonder and discover
- time to imagine and invent
- time to choose and select
- time to think
- time to feel and not be ashamed of feelings
- time to communicate and to reveal themselves
- time to express and time to create.

SECTION 2

AN OUTLINE OF STAGES OF PROGRESSION FOR SPEECH AND DRAMA
(kindergarten to lower secondary school)

These expectations of development in:

- Expressive Movement
- Talking • Listening • Story-building
- Drama
- Sounds • Words • Poetry
- Construction and Puppetry

are arranged in four progressive stages, A, B, C and D, and cover the period from kindergarten to lower secondary school.

- They are intended to be read in conjunction with the booklets about each of the five listed strands of speech and drama. They have been prepared in tabulated format as an aid to planning a continuous program throughout the school.

- Where children have continuous experience in these activities, the expectations for Stage D, for example, are realistic: where a teacher has an upper primary class who have had no experience in movement, he or she may need to begin with work suggested at Stage A. However, in such a case, it should be possible to cover and adapt work suggested in Stages A and B in less time than younger children would need to do the same types of activities.

- When reading these expectations, it is most important to bear in mind that:
  - each child is an individual
  - each child grows at a different rate
  - each child's experience is different.

- For this reason the column 'General characteristics' has been written using 'the child' singular – 'he' (meaning 'he' or 'she') to emphasise the fact that each is an individual, different from anyone else. The emphasis in the other columns is on the kinds of work children generally appear to be able to manage.

- Children's progression through this work will depend on the opportunity they have to participate in a consistent and continuous program of speech and drama activities. An outline arranged in stages such as these may help us to discover 'where children are' in their experience and acquisition of communication skills. When interpreting the *Stages of Progression* there is a very real need to distinguish between the child's 'lack of opportunity' and 'lack of ability': one does not mean the other.

- Where children encounter new materials, objects or ideas for the first time, they need opportunity and time to explore the new material and find out what it can do, what it can be used for, or how it can be developed. Where children have had little or no experience of certain materials, or where they have had different experiences of social relationships from those the teacher considers normal and desirable, they will need time and opportunity to feel confident and at ease with both the materials and the situation at school.

- We need to remember that children mature at widely different rates and ages, and that even in grade six and occasionally in grade five, some children become aware of approaching adolescence. They will need sympathetic and understanding support and guidance if they seem moody or find it difficult to work with certain other children in the group, or if the material they are asked to work with is unsuitable. With the onset of adolescence, children often become critical of their own efforts, and therefore this becomes a time when they need additional support and understanding.

These *Stages of Progression* are intended as 'a guide' to planning a comprehensive speech and drama program throughout the school. They are meant to be interpreted flexibly according to the children's previous experience and stage of development. They show how the strands of the speech and drama program re-inforce children's learning from kindergarten to lower secondary school.

STAGES OF PROGRESSION OF SPEECH AND DRAMA

Each child is an individual.
Each child grows at a different rate.
Each child' experience is different.

Basic to all areas of learning is the social health of the group:

- co-operation with others
- consideration for others
- control of self and material
- compromise and the ability to be tolerant
- concentration
- confidence in one's self and others
- communication skills.

Strands of speech and drama:

- Expressive Movement
- Talking, Listening, Story-building
- Drama
- Sounds, Words, Poetry
- Construction and Puppetry.

A. General Characteristics

The child's response to most events, people etc. is essentially PHYSICAL. He involves himself totally in all he does: he talks, sings, chants, moves as he works. He is ACTIVE in his own learning. He is very much an individual absorbed in what he can do and his own interests rather than in other people.

His talk is usually tied to a specific context. He may not be aware that his listener has no knowledge of the setting or background of his comment or narrative e.g. 'He tole me . . .' when the listener has no idea who 'he' is.

The distinction between the real, and the imaginary is still hazy.

His concentration span varies greatly according to his interest.

If he sees others as a threat or obstacle to what he wants he may be destructive or aggressive in his dealing with the situation; alternatively he may withdraw from active involvement.

Repetition is a dominant feature of his learning e.g. he enjoys hearing or saying familiar stories and rhymes over and over again, he may sing and chant a phrase or jingle repeatedly.

The child makes and uses symbols: he uses one thing to represent another –

- his own body is his primary symbol, i.e. he uses his body to represent objects, machines, animals, other people – he imitates and 'pretends'. One of the most remarkable features of this stage is the ease with which he 'becomes' something or someone other than himself.
- as he paints, moves, sings, talks, he makes meanings; finds meanings; assimilates meanings.
- he tends to draw what he knows rather than what he sees.
- as he scribbles he begins to make letters, and tries to write his name. He begins to recognise words on street signs, buildings, television advertisements, etc.
- his use of his body, sounds, picture-symbols, objects give him many avenues to express his emotions and thoughts, and to develop his mental images.

Note: When the child makes and uses symbols at this stage he does so instinctively, i.e. without planning or intention.

When confronted with a problem or task:

- he may not see more than one way of coping with it.
- he tends to take in random aspects in any situation, but can seldom identify or attend to the interaction of aspects. What he attends to, may 'screen out' other more important features, e.g. a persons' appearance may 'screen out' what is being said.

He is learning that numbers and letters can be used to make units of meaning. He is gaining skill in recognising and using words and numbers.

His sense of identity is growing – his awareness of himself, who he is and what he can do.

These 'general characteristics' are to be interpreted flexibly bearing in mind the wide differences that exist between individual children.

Remember:

- *each child is an individual*
- *each child grows at a different rate*
- *each child's experience is different.*

A. Expressive Movement

The body – or what moves

- The young children experience movement as a total involvement of the body, usually activated by their senses and emotions.
- They can most easily isolate hands and feet for specific focus.

Space – or where the body moves

- Children need the security of a clearly defined area in which to work and a focal point to which they can relate e.g. the teacher, a percussion instrument, or a point on the floor.
- The children's own bodies are still the centre of their spacial considerations, so they need guidance in sharing space with others.
- Children are able to explore spacial relationships e.g. 'close to', 'far from', 'behind', 'above', etc.

Time and effort – or how the body moves

- Obvious extremes of movement are most easily grasped e.g. high, low; big, small; heavy light; slow, fast.
- Young children find finer gradations between these extremes difficult. They find moving slowly quite difficult as it requires considerable control.
- Children are developing control and can learn to 'freeze' i.e. to arrest movement on a signal. Holding an arrested movement for a short time is a considerable challenge for a young child.

Movement into language

- Children enjoy exploring different ways they can move across a space e.g. running, jumping, crawling. They are able to find a variety of verbs to describe the action they and others can make.
- During movement sessions the teacher's use of language to stimulate movement is important:
  - it extends their understanding of familiar words
  - it introduces new vocabulary.

Verbal dynamics

- Children can move while saying the appropriate verb e.g. making slow smooth movements while saying 'slide'. They begin to be aware of the dynamic quality of language.
- They can experience energy (force) in the hands and feet, as they move and speak the verb simultaneously e.g. 'clench', 'pat', 'push', 'slide'.

A. Talking • Listening • Story-building

Talk grows out of children exploring, doing and making. Talking occurs in a context.

Talking and listening

- Children will want to talk about what they are doing and learning, and about experiences in and out of school. They should be encouraged to do so quite informally and spontaneously – to the teacher and other adults, to one another – as opportunity arises.
- The school needs to provide opportunities for many different kinds of talk e.g. talking
  - to label
  - to describe and give details
  - to explain
  - to question
  - to reflect – possibly as a result of the teacher pointing out something they had not noticed
  - to wonder and speculate
  - to predict what might happen – etc.
- As they sort objects, look at pictures and talk about experiences, they note similarities and differences. They tend to note extremes of contrast, but find subtler gradations more difficult.
- They often generalise from the particular, if some feature has made a strong impression e.g. 'My poppy is deaf', to the assumption that all grandfathers are deaf.
- They talk eagerly and with interest about paintings and illustrations in books. They can be encouraged:
  - to look for detail
  - to speculate about what might happen next, or could have happened
  - to discuss their own knowledge and experience in the light of the illustration
  - to notice and talk about sizes, shapes, colours.

Social skills

- Through playing simple name-games, simple co-operation and concentration games, children learn to take turns, to consider others and to share space, ideas and materials.
- They can recall and repeat simple sequences of names, events etc. These activities aid listening and concentration.

Stories and story-building

- Children enjoy stories and poems told or read aloud to them. They like to join in or tell parts of familiar stories. Stories most readily appreciated contain:
  - strong, simple action-lines
  - repetition e.g. cumulative stories
  - easily identifiable characters or groups of characters
  - familiar characters e.g. 'Little Pete' [drama →
  - complete short stories within a series.
- Children can begin to build a group story from a focal point such as an object, sound or picture, being led to find sequence by the teacher's questioning and help as she puts their suggestions together.
- They can retell simple stories, recalling short sequences of events, lists of details – or expanding the story by adding detail – 'Can we think about what the old man looked like?'
- Their ability to 'imagine' is fostered and encouraged in this way.
- They can tell a simple story or anecdote.

A. Drama

- Children are able to participate in make-believe situations with total absorption and pleasure.
- These 'pretends' provide opportunities for social interaction as they learn:
  - to adjust to others
  - to share space, materials and ideas
  - to co-operate with one another. They need the guidance and encouragement of the teacher.

Characterisation

- For young children the taking of a role usually centres on the job that the character does – the 'doing' rather than the 'being', e.g.:
  - a carpenter by sawing wood, etc.
  - dressing up (provided it is kept simple i.e. scarf, piece of material, umbrella, basket etc) is an aid to being someone else.
- Children at this stage have little understanding of character (i.e. personality) causing events.
- They may use exaggerated caricatures to portray 'bad' or 'ugly' people, or a beautiful princess.

Plot and action

- Simple short story-lines (sequences of events) can be played out in movement. The teacher can elicit ideas from the children, which they can use to continue the action.

The teacher needs to be aware of how he or she can participate in the action and encourage and extend their response in language.

- They enjoy playing out simple situations such as buying and selling, visiting one another, setting up house, going on a journey. Situations and language are usually modelled on people they know or have been with for a period of time. They often use whatever objects are to hand to represent the objects they need. [construction →
- At this stage they are usually more interested in what they are doing than in watching what class mates are doing.

(They gain very little from watching each other's work.)

A. Sounds • Words • Poetry

Exploring sounds

- Children enjoy exploring and discovering many ways of making sounds, using:
  - their own voices
  - their bodies, e.g. rubbing hands together, flicking fingers, etc. [movement →
  - common material e.g. paper, metal, wood, other objects
  - simple melodic and percussive instruments.
- They can learn to distinguish:
  - loud and soft sounds
  - high and low sounds
  - fast and slow
  - simple rhythms
  - the direction from which a sound is coming
  - the instrument or means of sound-making
  - one another's voices
  - sounds in their natural environment.

Sound and word patterns

- They can use words to make a simple repetitive phrase and to make simple rhythms to which they can move as they repeat them. [movement →
- They enjoy moving to spoken or sung 'rhythm-rhymes', 'activity rhymes' and to melodic and percussive rhythms.

Poetry

- They enjoy listening to and spontaneously participating in short poems that relate to their own experience. They can remember short poems.
- They experience the sound, rhythm and movement of language through nursery-rhymes, rhythm-rhymes, finger-plays and singing and are able to remember these.
- Through sensory experiences they can be led to seeing, hearing, touching etc. to discover more about objects around them – to develop a fresh, more sensitive awareness of their world.
- They become aware of the texture of words, as they listen to poems with vivid imagery, and as they select words to make their own 'word pictures' or images.
- They begin to make connections between previously unconnected objects and events, as they try to express their ideas, emotions and intuitions aroused by sensory experiences. In this way they begin to make images to express their meaning with greater immediacy and clarity.

A. Construction and Puppetry

Children explore materials and talk about what they are making.

- Young children are exploring materials and developing manipulative skills involved in using a variety of simple materials.
- They enjoy building constructions of all sizes, ranging from very small to very large.
- Children at this stage tend to work alone or sometimes with a friend; interaction with others is usually intermittent and brief.
- As they build and make, they talk to and about their constructions, to others and themselves. The teacher can extend this spontaneous talking and dramatic play by questions and comments which will prompt reflection and speculation.

[drama →

Puppetry

- Children enjoy 'instant' puppets – made by pulling a sleeve, or old sock over the hand, and finger puppets, then telling something about their puppets.
- When making a puppet, they need a variety of flexible materials which will ensure quick results. Their involvement is intense while they are making the puppet but may not be sustained over a long period.

The teacher could extend this into group storybuilding.

[storybuilding
drama →

- Finger-plays will increase the flexibility of hand and finger movements for later use of puppets demanding dexterity in manipulation.

[sound
words →
poetry

They can extend their puppetry into retelling simple chain or cumulative and traditional stories.

B. General Characteristics

The child explores more purposefully and begins to collect various objects.

He uses language to reflect on what he is doing, has done, and may do.

He plays more consciously with language; he is beginning to recognise some of the ambiguities of language e.g. riddles and jokes.

He can work with a partner and sometimes with a small group of friends.

He is more sociable and less absorbed in himself, but may reassert his 'independence' through aggressive or angry reactions.

He is beginning to recognise that there may be viewpoints different from his own.

He makes and uses symbols; he uses and decodes words and figures; as he does so he discovers meanings, both his own and other people's.

- In his drawings he is beginning to develop a sense of size in relation to space.
- He can use contrast more effectively e.g. contrasts of volume, pitch, size, pace, etc.
- He is able to use his body with greater control.
- He is developing a sense of time – a chronology of events e.g. to recall and repeat simple sequences (i.e. events in a story, sounds, movements) or reorder them for some other purpose.
- He explores more purposefully and becomes more familiar with various materials and tools.
- He is prepared to 'have a go' at anything which arouses his interest, and he wants to learn practical skills. He wants to help do 'adult' jobs and needs encouragement of his efforts.

When making decisions

- he is becoming more aware of status, in his dealings with people; how he perceives status and role will depend largely on attitudes learned from his family and also from the way he is treated at school.
- decisions about moral values are often made on a tit-for-tat basis – 'If he can do it to me, I can do it to him', or on the basis of imitation – 'He does it, so I can too'. Right or wrong are often a matter of keeping or breaking rules.

His sense of identity continues to grow. At this stage the child often shows significant growth in self-confidence, and is willing to try again and again to achieve an objective that interests him.

These 'general characteristics' are to be interpreted flexibly bearing in mind the wide differences that exist between individual children.

Remember:

- *each child is an individual*
- *each child grows at a different rate*
- *each child's experience is different.*

B. Expressive Movement

The body – or what moves

Children still experience movement as a total involvement of the body, but they are able to focus more purposefully on body parts, e.g. on hands, feet, head, elbows, knees.

Space – or where the body moves

They still need the security of a defined area and a strong focus e.g. the teacher, a strong sound. Their ability to use space and to see themselves in relation to others in space, is growing.

They are able to explore onward, forward moving designs in space, circular turns and spinning. They can be encouraged to explore curved, roundabout, twisty pathways in space, and also floor patterns. They can be encouraged to use space above, behind and to the sides of their bodies, and to use space around themselves. They can be led, in this way, to use and understand levels i.e. high, medium and low.

Time and effort – or how the body moves

They can experience speed in variations of quick and slow, and are helped by having a sound to follow e.g. on the drum or rhythm-sticks, or words.

They find it easier to increase speed gradually than to make a gradual decrease.

They have more control over movement and stillness, and respond more readily to a signal to 'freeze' a movement.

They are able to make short sequences and repeat them; they enjoy using contrast e.g. high, low; curved, straight.

They begin to recognise that particular movements, degrees of energy or force, (i.e. strength or gentleness) produce certain emotions.

Verbal dynamics

Children enjoy exploring the qualities of a wide variety of verbs, spoken as they simultaneously carry out the movement with the whole body, or with certain body parts.

They are able to develop short word-movement, sound-movement sequences, and recall them, either working alone or with a partner.

They are able to develop rhythmic sequences of words and movements, in repeated patterns, often with the addition of percussive sounds.

B. Talking • Listening • Story-building

Talking and listening

- Children require opportunities for a variety of language uses to a variety of people – adults and children.
- Children are more able to describe, explain and discuss what they are doing, and have done, seen or heard. They can reflect and speculate with the teacher's guidance and sympathetic suggestion.
- Children, when examining, sorting or experimenting are becoming more discerning about features that are the same or different. They are able to perceive a *variety* of features e.g. stones are rough, smooth; large, small; vary in weight, colour, marking, shapes etc.
- Children enjoy playing with words and language, particularly riddles, jokes and nonsense rhymes. They begin to see the funny side of commonly used metaphors e.g. 'his eyes were glued to the book'. They are beginning to see more than one possible meaning in words and statements.
- They benefit from activities involving alertness to signals, observation of detail and giving careful instructions. They are becoming more able to take turns and to wait for a turn to speak.

Stories and story-building

- Children enjoy listening to longer stories, as their concentration span is growing. They can begin to appreciate serialised reading of a longer or more detailed story.
- They still enjoy hearing again, or retelling old favourites. They still need a strong plot or action line to hold their attention.
- They can participate in making a story with the rest of the class, with the teacher leading and co-ordinating the activity, helping them to develop a sense of form.
- They enjoy the challenge of being asked to remember a sequence of events, or details of a person or object described, and recalling them. They can tell a short story.

B. Drama

Characterisation

Although children still tend to think of being someone else through imitating the work that person does, they are becoming aware of other characteristics. For instance, they may try using a different voice, or show slight changes in the language they use.

Their growing recognition of 'character' is often helped by a simple touch of appropriate costume e.g. a badge, walking stick, etc.

Individual children can recognise the status quality of a character and begin to see implications for interaction, i.e. the possibility of leadership and how it might affect the actions of the others. For example, 'If he's the king, we'll have to bow to him'. They are beginning to realise the effect their language and action may have on others.

Plot and action

They are aware of a story-line (in the sense of successive action).

They are able to develop short sequences from known stories or original ideas. Ideas related to personal experience and to television are very often incorporated into their dramatic play both in and out of the classroom.

The elements of 'fighting' or 'shooting' begin to assume a place in their outdoor play.

They enjoy participating with adults in a 'pretend' situation and are learning to respond co-operatively and generously to others.

B. Sounds • Words • Poetry

Exploring sounds

Children continue to explore sound-making with their voices, materials and instruments.

They enjoy using sounds to tell a simple story, with or without words. They are beginning to be able to use sound to interpret events, objects and people in their environment.

They can use strong contrasts of volume, pitch and pace, although they still find more subtle gradations difficult.

They can make and repeat a simple pattern or rhythm. These individual patterns can be 'orchestrated' by the teacher to help the children develop a sense of climax (working up to and away from a high point.)

Sound and word patterns

Through word-movement sequences, children can be led to a greater awareness of the nuances of language, of rhythms and the subtler meanings and textures of words. [movement →

Children can order their selected words to make word-ladders or short word-pictures; these can be derived from word-movement sequences, sensory experience etc. The emphasis in this activity is on thinking about and selecting words they like best, and on ordering them.

The suggestion of simple forms in which to order their words may be useful to some children. In this way they are beginning to write poetry.

Poetry

Children are able to listen to a wider range of poetry.

They can be encouraged to collect poems they enjoy listening to, speaking and reading. They can be asked to read a favourite poem to a friend, or a small group.

They find poems with strong rhythms and rhymes appealing and are able to appreciate vivid images and interesting words.

With the teacher's guidance they are able to speak a short poem with others in a small group; and can participate in two-part speaking and acted verse.

B. Construction and Puppetry

Constructions

Children continue to explore a wide variety of materials with greater manipulative skill.

They enjoy making a large construction with a small group of friends, and then playing with it, or in it, intermittently over an extended period.

With encouragement from the teacher, this spontaneous play can be extended into drama.

Puppetry

Puppets that children can make quickly from a variety of junk and scrap materials can be used as starting points for story-building.

Children are able to work in pairs to form:
- brief sequences e.g. greetings between two puppets, telling about the puppet, his name, where he lives, what he does.
- short question and answer duologues.

The children begin to see the possibilities of action and development as two characters are brought together. They will need the teacher's support and encouragement, usually in the form of open questions which may lead them to think of further interaction.

More purposeful exploration of hand movement is possible, developing patterns with hand and finger movements, including making patterns with a partner. Children are able to develop some dexterity in using hand puppets.

They can retell familiar and traditional stories through a puppet.

C. General Characteristics

He has a more realistic sense of time and can plan to get things done on time.

His 'collecting' habits are more purposeful and selective. He develops hobbies and interests which may carry over a number of years.

He has great energy and seeks physical and practical challenges.
Energy which has no constructive outlets may appear as aggression.

His language is more explicit and less bound to a specific situation.

He is socially more mature and likes to play in gangs or groups. He wants to be like others, to 'conform'. He may imitate older people whom he 'hero-worships'.
His friendships may be transitory or unsettled as groups form and reform.

He has a greater understanding of other people's viewpoints being different from his own and from one another.

He is able to use the expressive media with greater purpose and control

He is drawing more realistically from a particular point of view and is becoming more aware of details.

He can use his body, tools and materials to express a wider range of meanings.

His use of the elements of emphasis, focus, climax and contrast is developing.

When making decisions

He is influenced by the opinion of his peer group but adult models also have a powerful influence at this stage.

He has a strong sense of right and wrong based on his own experience and observations, but he is beginning to realise that there is more than one factor to be taken into account when dealing with any problem.

His self-identity grows

He is now aware of what he can do well, and what he finds difficult.

These 'general characteristics' are to be interpreted flexibly bearing in mind the wide differences that exist between individual children.
Remember:
- *each child is an individual*
- *each child grows at a different rate*
- *each child's experience is different.*

C. Expressive Movement

The body – or what moves

- Children are becoming aware of the possibilities of body parts leading their movement i.e. shoulder, knee, etc.
- They are more aware of movement having a *direction* i.e. leading *towards, away from* or *around* the body, which is the centre of the movement.
- They are more aware of movements and movement-pathways being direct (having a straight line from one point to another) or flexible (having indirect pathways from one point to another).

Space – or where the body moves

- Children become more aware in an objective way, of what their bodies are doing and of the space through which they are moving. For example, they are more aware of the shapes they are making while moving and in stillness.
- There is a greater awareness of the relatedness of body parts and the possibility of using them to create a wider variety of patterns in movement and stillness and when tracing pathways in space.

Time and effort – or how the body moves

- Children are able to work with a partner, using points of contact in exploring contrasting and complementary movements.
- They are becoming more aware of the *shape of spaces* they create between and around their bodies.
- As they work in pairs they begin to understand pattern or shape for a sequence, they also begin to develop a sense of climax – of working towards a high point or important moment, or working away from it.
- Children are able to plan and carry out short movement sequences to communicate an emotion or mood such as 'joy', 'fun', 'anger', 'peace', etc.

Organisation

- Children become more able to organise and plan their own work.
- They can work in larger groups to experiment with a theme such as 'rising and falling'.
- They find satisfaction in sharing their work with others in the class or with another class.

Verbal dynamics

- Children are able to work in pairs or small groups to build movement and word sequences which have a clear focus e.g. 'turning', 'angles' or a theme from social science, e.g. 'panning for gold', 'blasting rock', etc.
- Their recall is improving and they can develop and repeat longer sequences of movements and words, with or without additional sound patterns.
- They have a growing awareness of focus, and climax as they shape a piece of work.

C. Talking • Listening • Story-building

Talking and listening

- Children are more able to relate past and present in order to predict and speculate about future events. They enjoy discussing and planning an activity which involves actual 'doing', e.g. investigating objects that float in water.
  They can also cope with planning for an hypothesised or actual future event e.g. planning a camping expedition.
- They are beginning to realise how a variety of conditions or circumstances can affect planning and speculation.
- They are still more eager to talk, than to listen to their peers, but when challenged they can begin to listen critically and comment on important issues. Some children may still tend to 'sidetrack' and focus on irrelevancies. They will need the teacher's help in order to focus on major issues.

Stories and story-building

- Children are able to build a story from a variety of stimuli or starting points, with a partner, or in a small group. They can tell the story to another child, or group.
- Their stories, as they plan together, often move into drama or puppetry. They enjoy the challenge of finding ways to present a story to others.
- They are beginning to see the connections between events in a series.
- They are developing a sense of climax, or a high-point. They are also better able to *select* events and characters, rather than indiscriminately including all their ideas.
- Children have by now developed an understanding of more complex stories, and can sustain a lively interest in serialised readings of short novels.
- They are able to manipulate humour in their stories.

C. Drama

Characterisation

There is a development toward a physical and feeling interpretation of character in relation to situation.

Voice and walk is often adapted in an attempt to match the character.

They still tend to think and react as children within the role.

There is a growing awareness of interaction between characters, and a growing ability to recognise the implications of actions, i.e. cause and effect relationships.

Plot and action

They are more able to develop their own sequences, but still need the subtle involvement of the teacher in the activity.

They can repeat story situations with purpose and clarity, and are able to see more possibilities in new material.

They are beginning to sense climax and conclusion, but will still need guidance from the teacher. .

They are learning to be more generous in their response to a partner in improvised situations. They are beginning to 'think on their feet' as they become more sensitive to the possibilities for development in their partner's actions, reactions and dialogue. They are moving towards small group responsibility.

They are able to sustain an interest in drama over a longer period.

They are able to recall and repeat a sequence they have made and to refine it.

They are developing the skills of drama, being able to recognise and reproduce certain effects they may have stumbled upon during improvisation.

They are able more consciously to use the skills of drama.

They are able to discuss and solve problems within a drama context e.g. while pretending to be people in a small settlement they can plan how to cope with dwindling water supplies.

C. Sounds • Words • Poetry

Exploring sounds

Children are becoming more confident of their aural discrimination and will experiment with greater variation of pitch, rhythm, pace and volume to produce a variety of patterns and effects. They enjoy using melodic percussion instruments, and their own voices.

They are becoming more aware of the possibilities of expressing a mood or atmosphere through sound.

Sound and workd patterns: poetry

Through words-in-action sequences, children are able to develop vivid, dynamic 'word pictures'. They are more able to order and select words to convey their meaning. They have greater understanding of using sound and word patterns to express emotions or convey an idea or attitude.

The activities give them greater confidence to experiment with words and develop their own poems – from personal experiences and from shared group experiences.

Children enjoy reading and speaking poems of their own choice and sharing with others poems they particularly enjoy, including those they have composed.

With the teacher's guidance they are more able to work together in small groups to find ways of speaking a poem: they can experiment with unison, group and solo passages, movement and sound effects.

Longer narrative poems are among those they enjoy hearing.

As they read and listen to poetry and prose with vivid imagery and as they discuss it in the light of their own experiences, they begin to see similarities and differences more clearly: *they come to see fresh viewpoints, new relationships and to make original connections.* They begin to make their own poetic images and to appreciate and understand the images of others.

C. Construction and Puppetry

Constructions

Children are interested in co-operating with a small group to plan and build a more complicated structure. They enjoy exploring materials to find new ways of using them.

During construction the children's talking will be most important, as they plan, argue, speculate and discuss what they are doing or will do.

They are able to develop a short sequence or improvisation around the construction, to show classmates, or even develop a drama into which others can be invited e.g. 'Get into our spacecraft – we'll take you to visit our planet.'

They can also plan a number of constructions, possibly linked by a theme, from which small group improvisations may be developed into class drama.

Puppetry

They can explore with guidance specific types of puppetry e.g. shadow puppets, rod puppets, papier-mache hand puppets. They can also make and use large masks with some effect.

The earlier stage of playing with puppets is developing into the creation of a story-line, and the development of more realistic characterisation.

Simple themes such as:
- a journey
- lost and found
- a rescue

can help to build up the number of puppets used in one story, from one to two, to three, to four. The idea of all the characters not needing to be present all the time can be developed in this way.

Children can now use music and sound effects with their story with a degree of confidence.

They enjoy making their own songs and sound sequences.

Children are able to participate in partner work based on exploring ways in which the hands and fingers can be used to convey an idea, a mood or emotion.

Exercises such as these will help to develop sensitivity and flexibility in using hand puppets, and greater dexterity in manipulation.

D. General Characteristics

The child-adolescent has a growing desire to *communicate* his ideas, feelings and opinions to others.

He is able to 'put himself in someone else's shoes' more easily, and to appreciate that other's viewpoints may be different.

His language is beginning to be more explicit and he can, to a greater or lesser degree, deal with verbal abstractions.

Values become very important to him as he seeks goals and ideals worthy of his commitment.

His interests are less tied to present action – he is able to plan for future results.

Peer influence is powerful.

As he approaches adolescence he becomes increasingly self-critical. Bodily changes may cause him anxiety or embarrassment, resulting in moodiness or loss of concentration. He may find difficulty in coping with strong and complex emotions. Physical growth may outstrip mental development and this may produce frustration in the adolescent and may appear as a social regression.

He is able to communicate more purposefully through the expressive media:

- He can select the medium best suited to convey his communication.
- He is developing ability to use colour and line, words, body movements and sounds to express ideas and emotions more sensitively.
- He is learning to control the elements of form e.g. contrast, pace, climax. He is learning to shape work and to make a sequence which will convey a particular meaning.

When making decisions:

- peer influence is still powerful and he is impressed by the example of others.
- role prescription is often the basis for decision making e.g. 'It's right because *he* (the one I model myself on) does so, says so'; also, 'It's right because the teacher (or other authority figure) says so'.

This imitative basis for decision-making will be modified as he develops a greater understanding of the ways in which his decisions may affect others.

- he is becoming more aware of the complexity of factors in various situations.

Sense of identity

He is becoming increasingly self-critical and needs to have developed a positive self-image and sufficient competence in all the expressive areas *before* this period of self-criticism is reached, otherwise, he is likely to reject his own efforts of expression and communication.

These 'general characteristics' are to be interpreted flexibly bearing in mind the wide differences that exist between individual children.

Remember:

each child is an individual
each child grows at a different rate
each child's experience is different.

D. Expressive Movement

The body, space, time and effort

The children have a growing ability to channel and control strong emotions into movement forms and patterns which will communicate these feelings and resolve them.

They can begin to appreciate the significance of symmetry and asymmetry in body activities. They can make distinction between simultaneous and successive movements and they have developed an ability to join segments or sequences without abrupt changes or breaks i.e. they have discovered 'body flow'.

They show refinement in the use of degrees of energy (force), i.e. they are able to differentiate between 'strong and sustained' and 'gentle and sustained'. They begin to make a clear distinction between 'direct' and 'flexible' in movement -efforts, as well as in movement-pathways and patterns. They are developing an awareness of and sensitivity to form and climax, and are using contrasts with greater degrees of control in planned sequences.

Organisation

Children are able to work together with increasing sensitivity to one another and are therefore more aware of the total group and the interplay of relationships within the group. Interactions between larger groups become possible.

Verbal dynamics

They are able to *use* their developing awareness of the subtleties of language and sound-word textures in movement-word sequences, in order to create an atmosphere or mood and to convey a particular meaning.

They are able to use and *combine* a variety of media, such as sound, words, movement and, for example, a three-dimensional construction or sculpture they have made.

D. Talking • Listening • Story-building

Talking and listening

Children are more proficient at planning work in small groups. Their talking is now more explicit and they can use language more effectively to convey their meaning.

They enjoy discussing and finding solutions to more complex hypothetical problems. They are beginning to apply their general concepts to specific occasions and events, i.e. they are also able to muster the resources they have developed at earlier stages and to use them with some effect.

Through a series of planning activities they can solve problems, using drama, story-making, writing, painting, etc.

They are able to speak clearly and confidently to a group of people in informal and semi-formal situations.

Stories and story-building

They are developing an ability to shape and sequence their stories more effectively. They have greater understanding of:

- what is important what is relatively trivial
- the interplay of characters and how they shape events
- a high-point or climax to a story
- the need to convey the meaning clearly to e.g. an audience of classmates
- the listener's reception of their idea (and therefore they become aware of his attitude or viewpoint)
- the need for clarity of language and form.

They listen more intently to stories developed by classmates; their comments and questions are more relevant and they show greater understanding of cause and effect. They can argue more logically and show greater ability to reason, to predict, to speculate and also to reflect upon action they or others have taken.

They enjoy discussing stories and novels, read aloud by the teacher or read individually. They are beginning to realise that the action-line or plot and the characterisation are often used by the author to clothe or illustrate a central theme, attitude or idea.

D. Drama

Characterisation, plot and action – and organisation

Some children are able to take responsibility for a character's role within a situation; some are now able to think and react as the character and not as themselves, if only intermittently.

With help and support from the teacher the children can reflect on 'where we are now in our drama and how it might develop'; that is, they are able to speculate about or predict future action. In order to do this, they draw upon the imaginary past of the characters and on imaginary past events. They are able to use imaginative, but realistic detail to fill out historical facts.

Children are more able to sustain belief in the characters they have created, giving them credibility of language and action.

They are able to create their own sequences through means of spontaneous role-play. They can give and take clues spontaneously to lead to further development of character and action in improvisations. They can work together generously to create an extended drama.

They are now able to develop drama from a variety of starting points e.g. a story, a poem, an historic incident, an excursion, a news item or chosen theme.

They are growing in their awareness of climax, conclusion and the use of stillness in the overall shape or form of their work.

Towards the end of this stage they are beginning to use drama as an art form as well as a medium for learning.

They are refining their skills in drama, and in selecting and focussing on an idea.

Some children are now able to make conscious use of the materials and skills of drama which lead toward the more demanding skills of interpretating drama scripts.

D. Sound • Words • Poetry

Sound sequences

Children are developing an awareness of sound and the dynamics of sound e.g. contrasts of volume, pitch, pace and rhythm are handled with greater subtlety. They can use sounds in sequences and combinations to create a mood, to convey emotion or to tell a story.

They are able to combine other elements with sounds to create new or unusual forms.

Poetry

- They continue to enjoy a wide variety of poetry although the nonsense and the narrative poems have a special appeal together with poems of action.
- They are able to participate more sensitively in choral speaking and they still benefit from the teacher's subtle involvement.
- They are able to organise and share their own presentations of poems with other class members and other classes.
- Their poetry selection for presentation to others may trigger off interpretative work in a variety of other art forms – or lead indirectly to the development of original work through discussion and appreciation of a theme, ideas of language usage in a poem or group of poems.
- Having been introduced to a wide variety of poems through hearing them read aloud and through reading and speaking the poems themselves, the children are beginning to understand:
  - pattern in words, sounds and forms of poetry
  - the unique vision and form of poetry.

Many children may begin to evolve forms, or use traditional forms to express their own ideas, concerns and emotions.

They are more aware of their emotional response to a poem, and by building on this intuitive and sensual response, to understand *how* the poet is using language, how he is putting words together, how he chooses words to make effective images, to make an impact on our emotions and senses.

The children are now using and becoming aware of vivid or unusual ways of expressing ideas, i.e. they are beginning to understand figurative language.

D. Construction and Puppetry

Constructions

Children are able to use materials with greater skill. They are able to incorporate finer details into constructions.

They are more aware of spacial relationships and scale begins to be a more important factor in the execution of their ideas.

Children are able to plan and use constructions as a focal point for movement or drama, e.g. a string and cylinder construction may provide a stimulus for dance-drama with an extended word and sound sequence.

Puppetry

Children are developing skills in making and manipulating various types of puppets including articulated shadow-puppets, large rod-puppets and masks.

They are able to combine different types of puppetry.

They are able to appreciate and use inanimate objects as 'puppets' within the context of a story e.g. scissors and umbrella, etc.

Children are beginning to understand the various aspects of story, sound and image as a whole, and to develop them alongside one another. They can make group decisions about story and form to develop a simple puppet presentation for classmates or younger children.

They are able to use constructions as starting points to explore concepts in science and mathematics e.g. the imaginary vehicle which can be operated by batteries; the crane on the building site involving weights, counterbalance and pulleys.

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TEACHERS NOTES

a framework for speech and drama

EXPRESSIVE MOVEMENT

an introduction to speech and drama from kindergarten to lower secondary

The five supplementary booklets are entitled:

- An Introduction and Overview
- Talking and Listening. Storybuilding and telling
- Sound, Words and Poetry
- Drama
- Puppetry and Construction

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EXPRESSIVE MOVEMENT

As 'movement' is a term which is sometimes used to mean educational dance, creative dance, expressive movement, gymnastics or music and movement, it can be a little confusing for teachers involved in curriculum planning. The term expressive movement in the speech and drama program is to be interpreted as an individual exploration of 'what' the body can do, 'how' and 'where' it can move in space, and the ideas it can express within a given context. The program is based on the principles of movement as described by Rudolph Laban but we accommodate his method of dance into an eclectic approach which takes cognizance of the work of Christabel Burniston, Brian Way, Peter Slade and other improvisational methods of drama.

Expressive movement is a basic element in:

- the development of children's understanding of their own physical capacity
- extending language, sequence and form
- encouraging imaginative and logical development of ideas, *and*
- an area of experience which furthers social sensitivity and group co-operation.

The overall relationship of movement and language (thought and speech) is directly concerned with individual skills of communication. While movement exists in its own right as an expressive medium it is also a foundation element in other expressive and symbolic modes of communication.

Movement is a valuable and necessary activity because children's responses are essentially physical; they learn to think through moving and doing. For instance:

- The rhythms of life are made explicit and repeated many times by the child in his movement exploration. He imposes order and finds form through the developing awareness of his internal rhythms and the need to imitate and accommodate the rhythms of others.
- Movement provides a channel for emotional energy, enabling the mover
(a) to release that energy,
(b) to find ways of controlling it,
(c) to use it purposefully, that is, with intent to communicate meaning.
- Movement is a means of recalling sensory experience. It is an opportunity for reflecting upon, ordering and understanding responses to experience. Sensory experiences such as the warmth of a fire, the bitter taste of a lemon, the roll of the sea and the sounds and smells of the world, are stored away by children and used to inform their exploration and interpretation in movement.
- Children who are less able to express themselves through language, find movement a valuable means of expression as well as being a means of releasing tension and frustration. Through experience in using movement for communication they can be helped to find the language to express their ideas confidently.
- Movement is a medium for learning about and understanding other areas, such as spacial awareness related to maths concepts; positional words (i.e. prepositions) in the development of language. The teacher's choice and use of language during movement exploration is of vital importance in extending the children's own vocabularies and comprehension.

Organisation

- The teacher's voice is the most important instrument in guiding movement sessions.
- The teachers do not need to become physically involved in the movement session they are leading.
- It is best for the children to work barefooted, so it is wise to allow time within the organisation of the session for taking off and putting on socks and shoes.
- A simple range of good quality percussion instruments is useful for stimulating and accompanying movement.
- When deciding to use recorded music, it is necessary to consider carefully whether it matches the context and main purpose of the session.
- Use the available space to the best advantage:

(a) when using the classroom, organise the moving of furniture with the children's help and choose activities most suitable for the space available;

(b) when using the activities area, make the most of the space by exploring larger movements, such as jumps and leaps, movement themes involving travelling across larger spaces, floor patterns, advancing and retreating etc.

Relaxation

Relaxation brings about a freeing of tension in the mind and body that allows for new ideas and new connections to flow more easily. It is important to allow time for relaxation and for quietening down at the end of a movement session so that the children move on to the next part of the school day refreshed and relaxed in mind and body.

In order to relax, the children can either sit or lie down in as comfortable a position as possible in the space available. Because they often appear embarrassed or restless when asked to relax, it may help to have a specific focus such as:

- an imaginative idea, e.g. imagine you are lying on a warm beach; on the grass under a shady tree; floating on a lilo on still water, etc.
- a poem; while relaxing with eyes closed the teacher could read a brief poem with a calm peaceful atmosphere.
- music of a quiet contemplative nature.

Relaxation during the session is often necessary especially if the movement is either very energetic or involves great tension. The relaxation need not always be a complete letting go, but might involve contrasting or releasing movements, e.g. exploration of the energetic action of pressing in many directions demands muscular tension and might be followed by shaking or swaying movements to release the tension.

It is easier for children and teachers to begin exploration of movement with a focus on spacial awareness or body awareness. Although we focus on one aspect, e.g. extending and changing the body shapes from narrow (long, thin shapes) to broad (wide, spread-out shapes), other aspects are not excluded. Having a focus means that the teacher has a particular aim in mind and this aim becomes the guiding factor in planning for that session, but it does not exclude other aspects of movement. For example, exploration of narrowing and broadening the body can include speed, force, exploration of levels and work with others in group relationships.

The basic materials of movement are:

(i) the body, what it can do and how it can move
(ii) the space in which it moves.

The materials of movement are explored in relation to the principles of:

(i) effort involving force, time, flow and direction
(ii) relationships incorporating individual, pair and group work
(iii) sequencing and finding form involving recall, contrast, use of imaginative ideas, shape and flow, climax and resolution.

(i) The body, what it can do and how it moves.

THE BODY

(i) *What the body can do:*
  - (a) locomotion – travelling from point A to point B in any given space, in different ways and using a variety of balance points.
  - (b) elevation – travelling with leaps and jumps.
  - (c) turns – a way of changing the direction in which the body faces.
  - (d) rising and sinking – ways of changing levels in an upward and downward direction.
  - (e) opening and closing – finding the ways in which the body – and parts of the body – can expand or broaden and contract or fold.
  - (f) advancing and retreating – reaching forward and drawing back, towards and away from a focus, i.e. an object or person.

(ii) *Body awareness:*
  - (a) whole body movement.
  - (b) focus on various body parts, i.e. head or trunk movements or allowing one body part to lead the movement, e.g. an elbow. Different parts of the body are used as a base on which to balance, e.g. bottom.
  - (c) relationships between body parts, e.g. a hand close to a knee; a knee crossing in front of chest; an elbow behind a heel.
  - (d) body shapes – a shape is the result of a pathway traced in space; shapes can be angular, straight-line shapes, curved, twisted, wide, narrow etc.

(ii) The space in which the body moves.

SPACE
(*where the body moves*)

(i) *Direction* – up, down, sideways, backwards, forwards.

(ii) *Positions and relationships*
e.g. movements *near to* or *far from* the body
movements near to or far from others
movements near to or far from an object (e.g. a chair)
movement near to or far from a place (e.g. corner of the room).

(iii) *Sizes* – expanding the body to occupy more space or contracting the body to occupy less space.

(iv) *Levels* – whether the position of the body and its movement are
near the floor – *low*
up in the air – *high*
somewhere in the middle – *medium*.

(v) *Patterns* – can be straight lines, zigzags, curves, winding or spiralling patterns, etc.
Patterns can be symmetrical or asymmetrical.
These patterns can be made:
(a) in the air – above
– behind
– at the sides of
– all round
} the body, others, an object, etc.
(b) on the floor.
They can be made – alone
– with a partner
– with a small group.

(i) Effort involving force, time, flow and direction.

EFFORT

All movement has qualities of force (strength), time, flow and direction.

(i) Force – movement can be strong (energetic) or delicate, heavy or light.

(ii) Time, speed – movement can be slow or fast, with all the possible gradations between them; rhythm – movement can be rhythmically regular or irregular, smooth or jerky.

(iii) Flow – movement can be sudden (or stop suddenly) or it can flow on freely.

(iv) Direction in space – movement can be direct (i.e. have a straight pathway) or indirect (i.e. have a flexible pathway).

Laban[1] identified eight basic efforts:
press – thrust – glide – float – dab – flick – wring – slash
combinations of which are found in all movement.

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[1] Laban, Rudolph, *The Mastery of Movement,* Macdonald and Evans, 1960.

(ii) Relationships incorporating individual, pair and group work.

(iii) Sequencing and form.

RELATIONSHIPS

(a) Partner relationships – being aware of movement in relation to another person – behind, face to face, in front of, near, far, around, meeting, passing and parting, leading, following

(b) groups to groups

(c) individuals to groups

(d) individuals or groups to objects, or to a point in space

(e) individuals or groups to aspects of other art forms e.g. music, sculptured forms, and to occupational tools and instruments e.g. a bow and arrow, a tambour, etc.

SEQUENCING AND FINDING FORM

Being able to join two or more movements (or movement segments) together in order to convey an intention, or express an imaginative idea. This includes:

- ordering the movements to form a sequence
- being able to remember and recall the sequence
- joining the segments of the sequence to achieve a 'flow' from one segment to the next
- using contrasts of levels – high, low, medium
  time – fast or slow, etc.
  force – heavy or light, etc.
  relationships – individuals and groups
  rhythms – regular or irregular
- developing a climax
- developing effective beginnings and endings – a sense of conclusion or resolution (if appropriate to the theme)
- understanding how the overall shape or form of the sequence carries the meaning.

TWO EXAMPLES OF MOVEMENT THEMES

To further illustrate this point two movement themes based on locomotion have been selected to show how they might be used as a focus for exploration at different progressive stages, parallel to the arrangement of the stages of progression, A. B. C. and D.

THEME I:

Aim: LOCOMOTION with specific attention to rising and falling might be introduced and developed as follows:

STAGE A:

Activity	Related principles and materials of movement
• *Explore ways of moving over the floor.*	Exploring *space* which will include direction and *floor patterns.* Locomotion.
• As they explore encourage them not to bump others.	Control of self in space.
• The children should be encouraged to be inventive and find as many different ways to travel across the floor as possible. (They might use hands and knees, back, side, rolling and slithering on stomach or chest, etc.)	Exploring what the body can do includes a variety of locomotion .
• *Choose your two favourite ways of moving across the floor – repeat them (start and finish with stillness).*	*Recall* and possible ordering of two movements in *sequence.*
After this initial brief exploration, these movement sequences could be used as starting points for drama (see *Drama*).	
• *Who might you be?* *What are you doing?* *Where are you?*	Encouraging children's imaginative ideas.
The children share their ideas with the teacher and each other. They could either work on their own idea, or the teacher could choose an idea from those suggested by the children e.g. *Let's use Linda's 'where' – the beach, and Darren's 'what' – dragging a heavy load. You decide who you are, and begin to work.* Then	
(a) the children carry out their movement story in their own way; (b) the teacher and the children could build up the drama together and find an ending.	Extending and encouraging sequence and interpretation of imaginative ideas.

The teacher provides the structure and the children provide the ideas to clothe the structure.

FURTHER SESSIONS could explore locomotion and associated aspects using a different focus, e.g.

- using feet and legs – finding words to describe how we move i.e. hobble, tramp, teeter, saunter, skitter etc.
- pathways on the floor and directions
- elevation (jumps etc.), turns.

THEME I continued: LOCOMOTION with specific attention to rising and falling.

STAGE B:

Activity	Related principles and materials of movement
Move around the room, exploring the space we have to work in. Find as many different ways of moving as you can.	Exploring space: *floor patterns* and *directions.* Awareness of *body parts* and *levels.* Locomotion.
• *Repeat – and this time move high up and low down change from high to low as often as you like. Stop on the signal* (a tambour beat, word, hand-clap etc.).	Focus on 'rising and falling'. Arresting movement and holding in stillness.
• *Repeat – changing levels as before and add fast and slow – try not to touch anyone else. Stop on a signal and freeze.*	Effort quality in *time* added requiring control of individual movement in relation to other people and *space.*
N.B.: If the children are not able to use high and low as well as variations of speed they may not be ready for this added variation or the teacher may not have used language that they understand. If they understand but still find it difficult, try giving them more experience of locomotion plus level variation, before attempting to join all three together.	
• *Make a pattern of movements you enjoy, using different levels and speeds. Start high and end low. Begin and end with stillness.*	*Ordering* movements to form a sequence with attention to the beginning and ending of *sequence:* awareness of stillness.
In Pairs: *A is the leader, B follows. Repeat your movement pattern and let B follow you. Then change over; B is now the leader.*	Partner relationships involving leading and following: remembering and repeating a sequence.

THEME I continued: **LOCOMOTION** with specific attention to rising and falling.

STAGE C:

Activity	**Related principles and materials of movement**
Having a background of experience involving many aspects of movement, the children would now be able to focus on rising and falling or sinking movements.	
• *Move about rising to a high level and sinking to a low level. Let different body parts lead in the rise and fall e.g. an elbow, head, back, shoulder, and so on.*	*Locomotion* with rising and sinking. Awareness of *levels.*
• *Repeat – at end of each sinking movement, stop. Then begin another movement, sink to a low level and stop. Begin another rise and fall – then stop.* (The children use their own sense of timing and stop – not on a signal – but as they feel a sense of conclusion of each movement phrase.)	Developing control and a sense of timing.
• *Explore the ways you can move on the body part which comes in contact with the floor at the end of the sinking movement.*	Awareness of various body parts leading.
• *Find other ways of moving on the floor* after *the falling or sinking movement.*	Extension of work on locomotion.
• *Make a sequence (or movement pattern) that includes a rise and fall. Begin and end with stillness.*	Sequencing and finding form.
In Pairs: *Teach your sequence to your partner. Put both sequences together to make a fresh new sequence.*	Partner relationship in remembering, repeating and extending sequence.
These sequences could be extended into drama or story building: *Why are you rising?* *Why are you falling?* *Where are you?* *Who are you?* *What happens?* *How might your movement-drama (or story) end?*	The movement sequence plus teacher's questions form a structure to support and extend children's imaginative ideas.

THEME I *continued:* LOCOMOTION with specific focus on rising and falling.

(Children who have had a continuous program of movement for some years, will now be able to exert their own controls, and not need to depend on the teacher for control.)

STAGE D:

Activity	**Related principles and materials of movement**
• *Explore ways of moving round the room at different speeds – stop and hold your position in stillness when it feels right to do so.*	Locomotion with contrasts of movement and stillness; involving control and timing.
• *Continue to explore moving in different ways at different speeds – add a sinking or falling movement – hold your position in stillness before rising to move off again.*	Locomotion with focus on rising and falling.
• *Continue to explore rising and sinking at different speeds and now try to vary the levels as well.*	Extending awareness of levels (space) and time (effort).
• *As you continue to move at different speeds and different levels, let different body parts lead – come to your own stopping place at a low level.*	Focus on different body parts leading.
• *From a low level position and leading with different body parts, explore patterns in space* as you rise. *Explore ways of rising using different pathways in space as you rise (i.e. on your way up). The pathways may be direct or indirect, curving, straight, zigzag or twisted.*	Awareness of directions and pathways in space.
• *Explore a variety of speeds and pathways in rising and falling.*	
In Pairs: *Improvise rising and falling patterns together. Try to complement what your partner is doing. Experiment with your positions in relation to one another – you could move: side by side; back to back; face to face; one behind the other; round one another; or some other variation. Your movement could be: in unison; contrasted; or a sort of 'conversation'.*	Partner relationship. Space relationship between bodies and body parts.
• *Build a sequence in pairs which starts and ends in stillness and which can be repeated and shared.* This is a complex and absorbing task which could result in a greater awareness and appreciation of movement patterns themselves. The children are probably aware of the power of movement to evoke and communicate emotion.	Experimenting with all the materials of the theme to develop a sequence: communicating ideas through movement to others in the class.

THEME II:

Aim: LOCOMOTION and FINDING FOCUS with specific attention to advancing and retreating.

STAGE A:

Activity	Related principles and materials of movement
Explore different ways of moving about on the floor, move in and out between people, don't touch anyone. Stop on my signal.	Locomotion; space; individual control.
Now go on exploring, but move in another direction – what other ways can we move as well as forwards? Try some of these other ways.	Directions and floor patterns.
Now move towards me – stop when you get close to me (or stop on my signal) – move away from me, but still look at me – keep your eyes on me.	Introducing theme, 'finding focus': relationships.
Move towards me very high *Move towards me very low.*	Space: variation in levels.
Teacher can now vary this 'towards and away from' movement according to the children's capabilities e.g. *move towards me with high steps – pick your feet up as high as you can. Move away from me trailing your feet along the floor. Move towards me pointing some part of your arm at me – move away from me hiding that body part (e.g. arm) from me – but still keeping your eyes on me.*	Attention to body parts leading while maintaining relationship to a focal point.
This segment could move into drama or story building as for Theme I, stage A. (page 8).	

THEME II *continued:* LOCOMOTION and FINDING FOCUS with specific attention to advancing and retreating.

STAGE B:

Activity	**Related principles and materials of movement**
• *Move about changing directions as you like, careful not to touch others.* The children will move forwards sideways, backwards, making turns and varying speed.	Locomotion, directions, awareness of space.
• *Continue to move about using different speeds and directions – and also use different levels.*	Control of *speed* and use of levels.
• *Now the far wall will be our focus – move towards it, still keeping your eyes on it.*	Finding focus: object as focal point.
• *Move directly to the wall – that is, move in a straight line to the wall, but vary the level as you move – move away from the wall in an indirect pathway – but always keep your eyes on the wall – vary the level as you move. Retreat from the wall in a zigzag pathway.* (While the children focus on the wall – rather than on the teacher – he or she is able to look more objectively at what they are doing, to see if they are able to use variations of speed, pathways, levels.)	Introducing advancing and retreating: adding pathways and directions.
• *Now from any place on the floor, begin to move in any direction – on my signal* (tambour beat, bells, word etc.) *move towards the wall* (or chair, or window – whatever the focus is).	Building sequence with added sound signal.
• *Use different levels and pathways – and speeds if you can. Then move away from the wall to any point where you feel it is right to stop – hold your position in stillness.*	Exploring speed, levels, pathways in relation to stillness.
• This would lead into drama very easily: *What was there?* *What have we been looking at?* *Where could we be?* *Why did we move towards, then away from this imaginary person, object, place, etc.?*	Developing imaginative ideas.
Each child could work with his or her own idea, or the teacher could select an idea from those suggested, and a whole class drama or dance drama could develop. The children can be encouraged to find ways of beginning and ending their dramas.	The children are learning to use sequence and are finding out about elements of form.

THEME II *continued:* LOCOMOTION and FINDING FOCUS with specific attention to advancing and retreating.

STAGE C:

Activity	Related principles and materials of movement
The idea of a focus is extended in this stage to a focus in space – not an object or person.	
• *Move about exploring all the space we can work in, using different directions, different levels, different speeds. Stop on my signal.*	Locomotion, direction, time, control of stillness.
• *Look about this room and decide on a spot on the floor some distance away from you – watch it and move towards it – stop when you get there.*	Focus on a point in space.
• *Find another point to move to – now move to it but use different levels and speeds – stop when you get there and hold your position in stillness.*	Exploring levels and time in relation to focus.
• *Now find another place on the floor – move to it letting one part of your body lead you there e.g. a shoulder.*	Adding attention to various body parts leading.
• *Repeat varying body parts, speed and levels to other points on the floor, stopping and keeping still on arrival at the focal point.*	Alternating stillness and movement.
In Pairs: *Start far away from your partner – now move towards each other and retreat from each other – repeat, varying your speed and level – keep your eyes on each other. You will have to vary your pathways, in order to avoid others.*	Partner relationships within whole group involving awareness of others and control of space.
• This could lead into drama as the children think out why they are moving towards and away from each other, who they are and where they could be.	Development of imaginative ideas.

THEME II *continued:* LOCOMOTION and FINDING FOCUS with specific attention to advancing and retreating.

At this more advanced level, children with considerable experience in movement will be able to explore locomotion varying directions, speed and levels, and also be able to hold a position in stillness. The 'holding in stillness' is imposed and decided upon by each child, not the teacher. (Self-control.)

STAGE D:

Activity	Related principles and materials of movement
In Pairs: • *Advance and retreat from your partner varying speeds, levels, direction and the body part which is to lead – vary your pathway in space – use a variation of curved or straight, twisted or zigzag pathways.*	Partner relationships. Locomotion, directions, levels, time (speed) and focus (eye contact).
• *With your partner decide on a point in space (somewhere in the air e.g. a spot one metre below the light, or two metres out from the top of the blackboard, etc.)*	Relationships between partners using advancing and retreating theme.
• *Move towards that spot with your partner – work side by side – retreat from that point varying your pathway.*	
• *Repeat with variations of pathway and speed and with different body parts leading. Remember to keep your eyes on the point you've chosen.*	Awareness of body parts leading.
• *Explore moving towards the focal point one behind the other.*	Partner relationships leading and following.
• *This time as you move towards and retreat from the point, add strength – that is move strongly towards and away from the focus, then move with lightness and delicacy towards and away from the focus. Add variations of speed e.g. a slow strong advance and a light quick retreat.*	Variation of effort qualities of force.
• Variation of relationships between the partners can be tried out, and various combinations of locomotion, levels, speed, strength, pathways and body parts leading. (These combinations would be developed over several sessions, and various qualities e.g. speed, strength etc. would be the focus at different sessions.)	Interaction of movement qualities and relationships.
• *With your partner, find another focal point in space – at a different level (e.g. a metre above the stain on the floor). Explore advancing and retreating from this and other points you might find.*	

THEME II *continued:* LOCOMOTION and FINDING FOCUS with specific attention to advancing and retreating.

STAGE D *continued:*

Activity	Related principles and materials of movement
Groups of 4 and 5:	
• *Explore the possibilities of advancing and retreating in a group – decide first on a point in space. All move towards the point you have chosen – try to use a variety of levels, pathways and different body parts leading.*	Group relationships using the focus in space and other materials of theme.
• *Repeat – and explore variations of relationships in the group e.g. side by side, one behind the other, etc. and add qualities of speed and strength.*	
• *Explore ways of dividing the group, so some advance and retreat from others e.g. one towards the rest, two towards three etc. Vary the relationships within the group and experiment with advancing simultaneously, or following consecutively. Add qualities of strength and speed.*	Relationships: group to group, and individuals to groups.
• *Now add a movement idea – when we move towards each other, do we* pass *each other? Is it an aggressive encounter? Is it an exploratory, tentative, fearful, pleasant or joyful encounter?*	Imaginative ideas; awareness of intention behind each sequence.

We suggest that the teacher keep the focus on the movement at this point and not switch to drama: that is, develop the idea of a feeling, mood or atmosphere being created by the movement itself. lf.

A further extension of this work over a number of sessions might develop interaction between larger groups.

FURTHER EXAMPLES OF MOVEMENT THEMES

Other movement themes could be developed in a similar way. For example when exploring what the body can do in relation to themes such as:

- opening and closing
- contrasting strong and light movements
- patterns in space
- focus on a specific body part e.g. feet.

The following materials and principles might be considered in any order or combination.

Opening and closing

- Total body stretching and curling in both the horizontal and vertical positions.
- Explore a variety of body parts opening and closing e.g. hands only, lower limbs, elbows.
- Add *speed* e.g. a quick stretch and a slow curl. Gradations of speed are more difficult and come later.
- Add *force* e.g. a strong opening (or stretch) and a contrasting (i.e. delicate or light) closing or the same for both opening and closing.
- Vary the base (i.e. the body parts in contact with the floor) on which the body is balanced e.g. opening and closing the body, on a knee and a foot, the side of the body etc.
- Older children with some experience of movement can begin to explore the potential of opening and closing movements as a means of expressing emotions and attitudes towards others e.g. a closed movement away from another person may express rejection of that other person. Closed movements of a pair may express care and protection for one another. An opening movement towards others may indicate acceptance, pleasure, confidence, trust, etc.

Contrasting strong and light movements

- Explore body actions with contrasting strength and delicacy e.g. opening and closing, advancing and retreating, turns, elevation, etc.
- Tense and relax individual body parts e.g. clench hands then let them relax and open, pound and press feet with vigour into the floor. Then creep and tip-toe with delicacy across the floor.
- Experience tension and the release of tension in the whole body.
- Explore spacial aspects of movement with contrasting strength and delicacy e.g. floor and air patterns, levels and directions.

Effort actions often generate emotion in the mover. Strong tense movement may generate emotions such as determination, aggression, anger, power or certitude, whereas delicate actions may generate emotions such as joy, pleasure, fun, frivolity, tenderness or sorrow. For some children movement will be the means of recognising emotion and for others it will be a means of coming to terms with emotions. For example, after a brief period of exploration of strong and light actions, the children might be encouraged to talk about the intent and purpose of the action as they understand it. Some children may be unwilling to talk because they find the movement itself a satisfying and complete means of expression.

The teacher can help the children to find a context for emotions and a channel for energy generated by movement exploration, by asking questions to stimulate imaginative ideas, for example:
'Why are we pressing and pounding our feet into the floor?'
'Who might we be?'
'Where might we be?'
'What is the result of this action?'

Patterns in space

- Floor patterns e.g. straight and curving pathways on the floor using a variety of body parts on which to move along these pathways.
- Air patterns e.g. using a variety of body parts to 'draw' patterns in space.
- Add speed and force to the exploration.
- Add relationships e.g. work with a partner or a group.

Focus on a specific body part e.g. feet

- Explore moving on different parts of the feet e.g. toes, heels, sides, and also walking using the whole foot.
- Exploring foot movements close to and far away from the floor.
- Explore different ways that feet move e.g. hop, jump, skip, shuffle, stride, stamp, kick, leap, etc. (see *Verbal Dynamics*).
- Explore strong or heavy feet in contrast to lightly moving delicate feet.
- Explore feet running on a variety of surfaces, both real (e.g. grass, carpet, concrete) and imaginary (e.g. recalled surfaces such as sand, rocks, mud etc).

The examples given in no way cover all the possibilities within each theme nor do they take into account all the themes listed under the materials and principles of movement.

The materials and 'starting points' for expressive movement activity might also include:

(i) segments from traditional stories; all or part of selected myths or legends. Sections from many of the Picture Puffin storybook series; children's original stories.

(ii) activity and rhythm rhymes as well as selected poems e.g. 'Jabberwocky' by Lewis Carroll.

(iii) themes related to specific excursions, locations, occupations e.g. visit to a factory, circus, fishing ketch etc.

(iv) observation of static or moving objects.

(v) 'original' constructions.

(vi) segments from social science themes e.g. early Australian explorers, rituals.

On the following pages an example of each of these starting points is given.

1. A story or book

Many stories contain elements which provide excellent stimuli for movement. Using a story does not mean faithfully repeating the sequence or story-line. There may in fact be only a single idea which the teacher may decide to use for movement exploration.

The following example uses ideas for movement development from *Gilberto and the Wind* by Marie Hall Ets, published by Puffin in 1963.

Gilberto and the Wind is about a tiny boy who finds in the wind a playmate of many moods; one that can sail boats, fly kites, slam gates and turn umbrellas inside out.

Movement ideas might include:

- Strong forceful movement – moving against the force of the wind in a variety of directions with different body parts leading in the thrust against the wind. (Story tells of the force of the wind bending trees, twisting, turning and ballooning clothes etc.)
- Light tension-free movement using a variety of body parts, levels and directions. (Story tells of balloons, leaves and grass which are moved by a gentle breeze.)
- Pair work – sequencing, starting and finishing in stillness. One person represents the force of the wind and the partner the object moved by the wind. (Story tells of trees bent by the wind, clothes on the line, kites and balloons lifted in the air.)
- Pathways in space – twisting turning pathways.
- Turns – exploration of parts which turn, whole body turning, turning from one level into another, body parts leading in the turn.

- Pair work – rising and falling alternately in a turning pathway.
- Group work – groups of threes and fours; each member of the group using body parts to explore turns and to join these individual sequences together to make a co-operative movement sequence.

Other books which are useful for starting points for movement include:
Egrin and the Painted Wizard by Amanda Walsh, published by Puffin, 1972.
Patrick by Quentin Blake, published by Puffin, 1970.
Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak, published by Puffin, 1970.
The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats, published by Puffin, 1969.
The Wind Factory by Norman Daymil, published by Fabbri, 1974.
'Numbakulla and the First Aborigines' from *Dreamtime* by Ainslie Roberts, Charles Mountford, published by Rigby, 1970.

2. Activity and rhythm rhymes

These rhymes are valuable for helping children to feel the rhythms of language in a kinaesthetic way. For example in 'Jump, Froggie, Jump!' the children can feel the strong beat apparent in the first two lines. They also experience the contrast of improvising their own rhythms on the third and fourth lines, with a return to the regular beat of the final line:

Jump, Froggie, jump!
Over the log with a 'glump'!
Stop for a rest,
Puff out your chest,
And jump, Froggie, jump! – *by* Ruth Sansom

Extensions in movement might include:

- exploration of jumps e.g. from foot to foot, from one foot onto both feet, large extended leaps, small hops, jumping in different directions (e.g. backwards, sideways and forwards).
- exploring ideas of what they might be jumping over, onto, between, out of, into, etc.
- movement – dramas about other places where they jumped or what they might have seen as they jumped along.
- making up their own jumping or hopping rhymes.

A wide variety of useful activity and rhythm rhymes can be found in *Rhythm Rhymes* chosen by Ruth Sansom, published by A. & C. Black, 1964.

3. Excursions

Sensory experiences during an excursion can be recalled at a later date. These provide a rich source of stimuli for movement. For example a visit to Molesworth and the hop fields with a specific focus on the twining hop vines; the movement session might include:

- individual exploration of curved pathways – pathways on the floor and in the air
- moving from one level to another using curved pathways
- pair work – sequence of interwoven curved pathways
- large group – improvised interwoven curved pathways at individually chosen levels leading to a recalled movement sequence.

4. Objects – moving or static

Close observation of moving or static objects can lead to discovery of movement qualities e.g. fish or snails in an aquarium and appreciation of line and shape, e.g. imbedded fossil shells in rock.

(a) From observation of snails moving on glass

- Exploration of slow advancing and retreating towards and away from a focal point, using:
  - a variety of balance points
  - a variety of body parts leading
  - a variety of levels and directions in space.
- Exploration of floor patterns and turns, using:
  - a variety of ways of locomoting (body parts leading in the turn).

(b) From observation of shells in fossil rock.

- Exploration of curved, curled, twisted and radiating pathways in space.
- Contrasting flexibility and rigidity in movement and stillness exploring a variety of balance points and body parts.
- Pair work of leading and following in pathways in space.

5. Constructions

Constructions made from a wide variety of materials can be used as a focus for movement. For instance a construction made from dowelling rods and plastic connectors (e.g. The Outdoor Mathematics Equipment, Frequency 1 or 2 prepared by Mr Kevin Anderson, Outdoor Mathematics Consultant) can lead to work exploring angles and straight lines. The following movement ideas could be developed from such a construction:

Individual work

- The children could find various ways of interpreting angles through exploring all the possibilities of bending the body and parts of the body.

- Bends could be explored at a variety of levels and in various directions – forwards, backwards, sideways, downwards and upwards.

Pair and small group work

- Explore ways of making a movement sequence or dance using straight lines and angles; introduce a variety of contact points in meeting and parting e.g. an elbow of one child to a knee of another, a wrist to a head, etc.
- Explore ways of moving through a large construction in straight line air patterns and floor patterns, or in contrasting curving or twisting pathways, individually or in small groups.
- Explore ways in which group movement sequences or dances might combine or relate to one or two other group sequences.
- Small groups might consider what the construction reminds them of and move towards or away from it in a way that interprets their feelings about it.
- After a discussion of their feelings, the teacher could help the whole group to build a movement sequence or drama using the construction as a focal point.
- Sound sequences might be developed based on ideas evoked by the structure. These sound sequences could in turn be used as a stimulus for further movement and drama development.

6. **Movement from a social science theme** (e.g. early Australian explorers)

After a discussion of the particular explorer e.g. Leichardt, and the jungle-like terrain of his journeys in Queensland and the Northern Territory, the children might explore movement involving, for example:

- cutting through thick bush e.g. slashing, heaving, lifting etc
- carrying supplies and equipment
- crossing rugged mountainous terrain or treacherous swamps
- crossing a river
- making a clearing and setting up a camp.

These themes would be well suited to group work, and would involve considerable research and discussion in order to help the children visualise the terrain and the problems it presented to the explorers.

With the older children all the above examples might develop into dance-dramas which they might wish to share with another class. In extending and refining 'movement-stories' or 'dance-dramas' the children might consider:

- the use of sound effects to enhance or complement the movement
- compose their own musical accompaniment
- select appropriate recorded music as introductory or background music for some sections of the story
- introduce the dance-drama with a brief story outline.

Whatever the chosen 'starting point' may be, the exploration and process of developing movement-stories is based upon the principles of expressive movement.

SOUND SEQUENCES AND RECORDED MUSIC

Because of the very close link between movement and sound the two are often used together. Careful consideration must be given to how they are used so that aspects of this relationship can be understood.

Children enjoy moving to music which has a strong rhythmic quality. A variety of rhythmic patterns can be explored by the children using percussion instruments as they move (i.e. the children use an instrument and move simultaneously). In this way they develop their own rhythmic patterns of sound and movement. For example:

- Children who have been exploring ways of bending, and parts of the body that bend, might accent the beat in a rhythmic piece of music, with bends – hand, arm, head, waist bends.
- They might also use bends that occur in jumps, hops, etc and bends on a variety of balance points.

Other relationships between sound and music can be investigated:

e.g.	Sound	linked with	Movement
	pitch	*linked with*	levels (high, low and medium)
	volume	*linked with*	effort (forceful or without force) *and* dimension (large and small)
	tempo	*linked with*	speed (gradations from fast to slow)
	duration (long and smooth; short and sharp)	*linked with*	flow (free flowing or arrested)

These relationships can be explored using either the musical instruments in the school or recorded music. If recorded music is used, then it should be carefully chosen for its clarity of intent (e.g. crescendo and diminuendo) and its length i.e. not so long that the beginning is forgotten before the conclusion is reached.

Sound and music can also be used to evoke a feeling response. Children can respond to sounds they make themselves e.g. exploring their movement responses to the sound patterns they make using Indian bells held and played by the child as he moves: this can be an individual or group response. Children can also respond to sound patterns made by others.

Children can respond similarly to recorded music which clearly evokes an atmosphere or mood. The piece of music chosen for this is more valuable if it is short and has a clear form so that the children can use it as a basis for developing and shaping a movement-story or drama which they can remember and repeat.

Sound Sequences and Recorded Music

The following example of a session using related elements of sound and movement followed by a piece of music, illustrates the points being made about the use of music. In this example *long and short sounds* are explored and related to *smooth and spiky movements:*

- Moving smoothly over the floor from place to place and holding in stillness before moving again.
- Jerky sharp movements from place to place.
- Smooth gestures in the air using head, limbs and trunk.
- Sequence of smooth and jerky movements which can be repeated.
- Exploration of sounds (vocal and percussion) that are long and contrastingly short.
- Sequence of long and short sounds.
- Individuals or groups respond in movement to sound sequences and vice-versa.
- Play recording of Saint-Saens 'Aquarium' from *Carnival of the Animals* and respond in movement to the contrasting long and short phrases in music.
- Use children's ideas which arise from discussion to construct group dramas.

VERBAL DYNAMICS – *(the movement quality and force of words-in-action)*

A further development of movement and one which relates directly to language, is an activity which Christabel Burniston calls 'verbal dynamics', meaning the synchronising of a spoken verb and its appropriate movement, i.e. the verb is spoken during the carrying out of the appropriate movement. Vocabulary which the teacher and children discover and use in this way helps children to grasp the meanings of words at a physical and sensory level. Language becomes more explicit and vivid as a result of a deeper understanding, and gradually on these physical and motor experiences, children build wider and more abstract concepts and make connections between ideas.

Verbal dynamics is not just an exercise in vocabulary extension, it is also an exploration of the relationship between the sound and texture of words, and their meaning. The activity can also extend into expressive and interpretative aspects of language, in this way forming a basis for writing and speaking poetry.

Verbal dynamics can be approached in a variety of ways, using direct and indirect experience as a stimulus.

Direct experiences

A. *Objects that can be handled or touched*

(i) An object (or number of objects) can be used by the children and the teacher who attempt to find words that relate to their handling and use of the object, e.g. objects such as newspapers, balloons, a ball, light scarves, feathers, leaves, lumps of clay can be handled while they try to find words that relate to the experience. (How the objects are handled will depend very much on the possibilities the teacher sees in the objects chosen.) The teacher should be ready to suggest other possible ways of handling the objects in order to extend the children's sensitivity, imagination and vocabulary. For example:

- The children might use feathers, noting their qualities of lightness and the way they fall when dropped; some of the words suggested might be: *float, dip, twirl, eddy, rock, dive, sink*, etc.
- Laying aside the feathers they would then begin to use parts of their bodies to find ways to suggest, not the feather itself, but the qualities of movement suggested by the moving feather; that is, they would explore ways in which their bodies and body parts could move to suggest *float, twirl, eddy, sink*, etc (see also section on *Expressive Movement*).
- The teacher might then suggest that the children choose any three words they like (or the group could suggest three words, which all would then use) and experiment with movement while they speak each word aloud, feeling the dynamic quality as they speak and move simultaneously. The children would be asked to find ways to join segments of movements and words together, to move from one to the next without a break and to decide on the order of the sequence, and how many times each word was to be spoken. For example, one word-movement sequence derived from observations of the feather might be:

- 't-w-i-r-l' (slightly elongating the vowel to synchronise with a spiral body movement)
- 'rock, rock, rock' (synchronised with three quicker movements)
- 'dive' with a strong downward movement, ending with stillness and holding the final position for a moment.

(ii) Words and actions accompanying some activity or simple action, e.g. using a tool, playing a game. If digging with a spade were the focus, one possible sequence of words and movements might be: *lunge, cut, lever, scoop, toss.* Some words might be repeated, e.g. *lunge, cut* (3 times); *lever* (2); *scoop* (drawn out); *toss.*

(iii) Children could walk barefooted on a variety of surfaces, e.g. door-mat, grass, concrete, gravel, polished floor, lino etc and suggest words and movements that reflect the tactile sensations of those surfaces. Similarly various kinds of texture could be explored e.g. a rough piece of rock, a piece of velvet, satin, corrugated card, chicken wire etc and movements could be matched with words that interpret these tactile sensations.

B. *Objects that can be observed*

- Objects which are not easily handled but can be closely observed, can be used as a stimulus too; the concentration is on qualities suggested by the object, animal, etc., not on trying to be the object or animal. For example, a bean plant growing in the classroom might suggest the following words: *twine, knot, uncurl, thrust, swell, reach* etc which could be explored with body parts, and a sequence developed like this one:
  - 'thrust' (with, for example a strong direct movement)
  - 'knot' (with, for example, a strong closed movement)
  - 'uncurl' (with, for example, a slow opening movement)
  - 'twine' (with, for example, a slow indirect movement).
- Other useful 'starters' are snails, seeds (blow them or use a fan to see them move), fish in an aquarium.

C. *Movement activities*

The children can be encouraged to find words to accompany movement exploration with a focus on:

- movements made by body parts e.g. feet: *stride, totter, limp, tramp*
- movements of weight e.g. *drag, cuff, punch*
- smooth or jerky movements e.g. smooth: *glide, spread, swing, slide, swerve*
- movements and words related to expansion or contraction e.g. *swell, expand, rise, stretch* or *squeeze, crouch, contract, wither, shrivel*
- movements and words related to degrees of time e.g. *dart, race, loiter, meander, saunter, drift, spurt*
- words and movements with a 'broken' quality such as *zigzag, stumble, hobble, struggle, teeter.*

D. *Speech sounds*

Speech sounds explored through verbal dynamics help children to become more aware of the flexibility of their voices and the dynamic elements of words. For instance:

- the 'f' sound often suggests light airborne movement as in *float, fly, flick, feather, flee, flame*
- the 'b' sound often suggests heavy direct movement e.g. *bang, batter, beat, bump, bend, break, burst, boom, bash*
- the hard 'k' sound usually suggests a sharp crisp quality of movement e.g. *cut, crack, kick, pick, click, clasp, spark, flick.*

In this way most speech sounds can be experimented with and discussed, bearing in mind that the quality of the sound changes when used in conjunction with another sound e.g. 'k' on its own gives a sharp hard effect, but when used for instance with 'r' as in 'crunch' the effect and the movement is more sustained.

From these exploratory activities movement and word sequences can be developed either from a series of similar sounds and words, or by using contrasts e.g. 'scoop and fling', 'flick and punch', 'press and jab'.

Similarly movement and word or sound sequences can be built up to convey a mood or atmosphere, such as 'laziness, fun, a sleepy summer afternoon', etc.

Indirect experience

Verbal dynamic sequences can be built up from recalled and imaginary experiences, but for some children these stimuli may not be as vivid and motivating as direct experiences. Some examples of recalled or imagined experience which could be used for developing word and movement sequences might be:

- Lighting a fire – variations might include different locations and types of fires, e.g. in an indoor fireplace; outdoor fireplace (barbecue); garden rubbish; bonfire; bushfire, etc.
- Aspects of weather such as rain, storm, flood, damburst.
- Erecting a structure, a building site.
- Topics related to other aspects of the curriculum, e.g. goldmining: panning for gold, cradling, digging a mine shaft, tunnelling, detonating rock.

Interpretation of poetry and prose

Verbal dynamics can also be used to aid the interpretation of spoken poetry and prose. For instance, vivid words from the passage to be spoken, can be explored through the use of speech and movement, so that the children begin to sense the dynamic quality of the words. (Many examples of this approach are given by C. Burniston in her book *Into the Life of Things.*)

A poem such as 'House Moving' by Patricia Hubbell from *Junior Voices* Book I (Penguin Books, 1970) is particularly suitable for this treatment and lends itself to exploration through speech and movement. Children enjoy the vigorous words used:

Look! A house is being moved!

Hoist!
Jack!
Line!
Truck!

Shout!
Yell!
Stop!
Stuck!

Cable!
Kick!
Jerk!
Bump!

Lift!
Slide!
CRASH!
DUMP!

Verbal dynamics activities offer children and teachers many exciting possibilities for group work, combining and 'orchestrating' groups, contrasting groups and also combinations of group and solo work, for interpreting written language, for developing original sequences and also for stimulating original writing.

Word patterning and poetry

Word sequences which have been developed through verbal dynamics activities can be used as the foundation for word patterning and poetry writing. For example, after exploring various surfaces with barefeet the word lists which the children have contributed could be expanded into brief poems or pieces of writing as they try to express their thoughts and feelings about the tactile sensations of concrete, grass, gravel, etc.

Having become more aware of these sensations and more sensitive to the language they have chosen to describe this experience, they will probably listen with greater interest and insight to poems and other writings in which the authors deal with similar experiences, e.g. Patricia Hubbell's poem 'Gravel Paths' in *Junior Voices* Book 2 (Penguin Books, 1970):

I feel crinkled when I walk on gravel paths.
The gravel crinkles me
And I become gravel,
Crunched under five thousand footsteps . . .

RESOURCES

Movement

Mettler, Barbara *Children's Creative Dance Book,* Mettler Studio, 1970
Blackie, P., Bullough, B. & Nash, D. *Drama* (Chapter 2), Macmillan, 1972 *
Russell, Joan *Creative Dance in the Primary School,* Macdonald & Evans, 1975 *
Russell, Joan *Modern Dance in Education,* Macdonald & Evans, 1958 *
King, Nancy *Giving Form to Feeling,* Drama Books Specialists, New York, 1975
Cust, Janelle *Creative Dance,* Physical Education Publications, 1974 *
Bruce, V.R. *Movement in Silence and Sound,* Bell & Son, 1970

For older students

Laban, Rudolph *The Mastery of Movement,* Macdonald & Evans, 1960
Nicholls, Bronwen *Move,* Heinemann Educational, Australia, 1974 *
Bruce, V.R. *Dance and Drama in Education,* Pergamon Press, 1965
Mettler, Barbara *Materials of Dance,* Mettler Studios, 1971
Slade, Peter *Natural Dance,* Hodder & Stoughton, 1977

* *Particularly useful in devising a kindergarten – grade 10 program.*

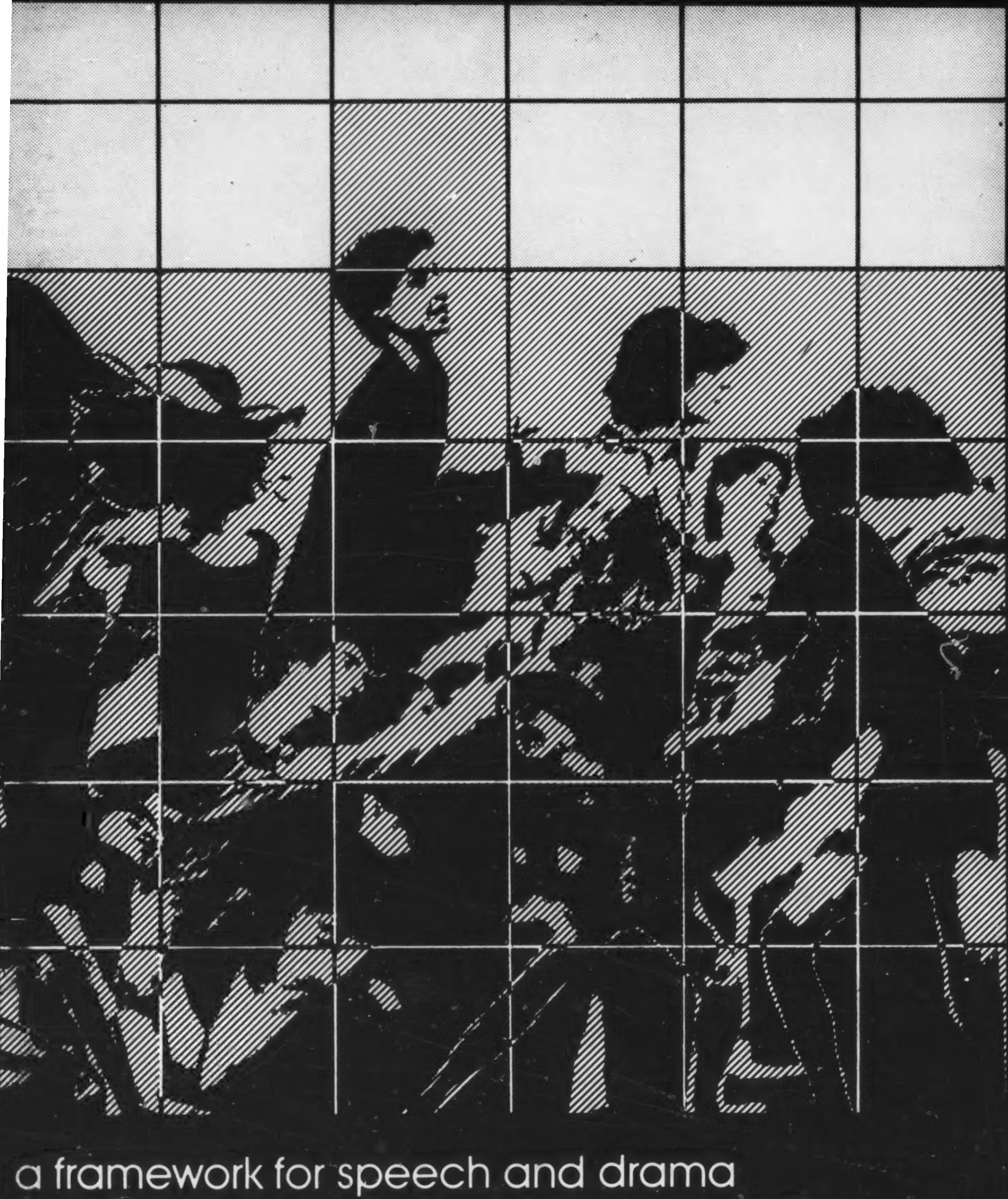
Film

Dance in the Primary School –available on loan system from the Tasmania Media Centre

Verbal dynamics

Burniston, C. & Bell, J. *Into the Life of Things: an exploration of language through verbal dynamics,* English Speaking Board Publications, 1972

Additional list of Picture Puffin books suitable for movement and verbal dynamics available from the Speech and Drama Centre, 73 Brisbane Street, Hobart.



a framework for speech and drama

TALKING & LISTENING
STORYBUILDING & TELLING

Tasmania Media Centre Education Department Hobart 1980

an introduction to speech and drama from kindergarten to lower secondary

The five supplementary booklets are entitled:

- An Introduction and Overview
- Expressive Movement
- Sound, Words and Poetry
- Drama
- Puppetry and Constructions

The material in this booklet has been prepared by
the Speech and Drama Centre, 73 Brisbane Street, Hobart, Tasmania
and produced by
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TALKING AND LISTENING

Language is learned in a context of situations – of doing, of manipulating materials and objects, of interacting with people. Language needs to continue to grow roots in first-hand experience. New experiences may cause the child to recall previous, possibly similar, experiences. In this way children begin to look forward to future experiences and begin to form expectations and predictions.

We need to be aware of situations we can structure, opportunities we can seize (which have arisen spontaneously) to give the children in our classes opportunities to use language widely, and more especially, to use oral language in ways they may not be familiar with:

e.g. to reflect on what they have done
to recall and give details of past experience
to anticipate future events and predict outcomes
to recognise problems and offer solutions to them
to plan and survey alternatives for possible courses of action
to project into the experiences and feelings of other people
to use their imaginations to build 'scenes' for drama
to reason about events and speculate about cause and effect.

Within the curriculum we need to make opportunities for the many uses of speech e.g.exploratory and speculative talk – 'It could have been . . .', 'Perhaps it means . . .', 'Probably it was . . .', and reinforcing talk, by which the child makes new acquisitions of knowledge his own – recoding, adding to and changing the knowledge he had previously, grouping and regrouping ideas in the light of fresh ideas, seeing connections, comparing ideas and discovering similarities and differences.

By taking advantage of the children's interests, by using ideas, objects, animals, insects or even people whom they or the teacher may introduce into the classroom, we can harness the children's enthusiasm and curiosity to help them to learn. Excursions too can generate a zest for learning.

The following questions may help teachers to look more closely and critically at their programs, and will also suggest important opportunities for talking and listening in the classroom environment.

(a) Teachers' attitudes

- As teachers, are we aware of the way our expectations (which may often be flimsily based prejudgments) affect children's responses and behaviour?
- Are our attitudes sufficiently caring; do we accept each child as being different, with a background and experiences unique and valuable to himself?
- Do we really listen to the children in our care?
- Do we explain to the children *why* certain activities, procedures, lessons are necessary and what they will gain from doing them?

- When we make explanations do we encourage questions, opinions etc.from the children?
- Do we involve the children in *planning* some of the activities that happen inside and outside the classroom?
- Do we explain why rules are necessary – or better still, involve the children in discussing and deciding on what rules we should make in our room?
- Do we give the children opportunities to discuss objects and ideas of interest, informally in small groups?
- Do we give the children opportunities to talk informally with adults other than ourselves?
- Do we use parents with some special knowledge or skill, by asking them into the classroom – not to give a lecture, but to show their skills or talk informally to the children? e. g. a parent who is a potter or weaver.
- Do we allow the children to teach us – at any rate some of the time – do we admit that there are things we don't know, and either learn from the children or find the information together? e.g. the workings of a combustion engine, the care and breeding of pigeons, cooking a traditional Greek, Lebanese, Italian or Vietnamese dish.

(b) Children's attitudes

- Are the children encouraged to help each other, to listen to each other and occasionally to teach each other?
- Do they often bring interesting objects, creatures etc.to school because they are genuinely interested and wish to talk about their finds?
- Are they learning to consider each other, to share space, materials and ideas generously?
- Do the children have opportunities for experimenting with and enjoying language:
  - trying out new words
  - appreciating the sound and flow of words
  - finding new ways of connecting words to make new images
  - experimenting with the ambiguities of language in jokes, puns, idioms and figurative language?

(c) The physical environment

- What sort of message does the classroom convey? The arrangement of the room, the materials available, the interesting objects on view all convey subtle messages of caring about people – or not caring about them.
- Are the children encouraged to add to or initiate displays?
- Whose interests are reflected in the displays and arrangements?

- Whose needs are being catered for in the arrangement of furniture and displays, and in the use of the available space?
- Is there too much auditory or visual stimulation? i.e. Is the level of sound or the variety of visual displays overstimulating or distracting rather than productive?
- Do we encourage children to choose the materials or medium of their response, at least some of the time?
- Do we overhear the children say when an excursion is planned: 'I suppose we'll have to write about it when we get back!' If we discuss possible responses to a stimulus, they may have other suggestions which will fire their enthusiasm and add to their learning. For example, following an excursion the children might choose to record their impressions:
  - through talk, e.g. to a child from another class, or onto a tape
  - through writing e.g. make a book illustrated with paintings, drawings or photographs taken on the excursion; or to write a poem
  - through various materials of the visual arts including clay, collage and three-dimensional materials in constructions
  - through sound
  - through movement
  - through map-making and measurement.

All these questions, when considered seriously, will suggest numerous occasions for purposeful talking and listening, as we encourage children to become more responsible in their attitudes to others and to learning. The teacher's attitudes towards the children are far more powerful in helping or hindering learning than we like to admit.

Social occasions

Within the daily life of the school we need to allow time for talking generated by social occasions. It has been said that language carries the social genes of our civilisation and we need therefore to allow children time and opportunity to acquire some proficiency in skills such as:

- using a telephone, making and answering a call
- greeting visitors and parents who might visit the school
- showing people – new pupils or visitors around the school
- explaining and describing, giving clear directions, carrying messages
- introducing parents to the teachers
- being able to recount some interesting news to the class or the school assembly e.g. the outcome and events of a soccer match.

However, not all the children in the school will have the opportunity to use or develop their everyday social language skills *unless particular situations and occasions are arranged* to allow for social interaction with visitors, both adults and children.

Occasions such as the following allow for the development of social skills, courtesy, and self-confidence in dealing with people from outside the school community:

- The children could prepare a simple meal or other refreshments to which parents or interested members of the community are invited. The children would then be responsible for introductions, greeting and speaking to guests, serving refreshments to them and practising social courtesies.
- Events being organised within the school to raise money e.g. stalls, fairs, etc.could involve the children with the adults, giving opportunities to the children to serve customers at the stall, serve teas and handle money transactions with courtesy and confidence.
- A discussion on social courtesies, on greetings, introductions, giving directions and answering questions could precede Open Day at the school, and with the co-operation of parents and other adult visitors, it could provide a valuable opportunity for acquiring social poise.
- An invitation to a class in another school to pay a visit for a day or morning, would give children the opportunity to learn how to welcome, and put at ease, visitors of their own age group. Such a visit could include a barbecue and the sharing of work in language, drama and other areas e.g. improvisations, story-telling, movement segments, verse speaking etc. Some exploratory or impromptu work could be attempted e.g. one class either improvising sounds or music, or recalling sound patterns made previously, to which the other class might improvise movement or a story. The visit could be preceded by letters of invitation and replies, which would give the children opportunities to learn how to construct such letters and the excitement and fun of receiving letters from other children.

After such events there could be a recounting of experiences to another class, writing and discussion, giving further opportunities for language use with possible extensions in other forms of communication e.g. painting, movement, improvisation.

Getting to know names

An important aspect of healthy relationships in the classroom involves the children and teacher knowing and using one another's names. Name games such as those outlined below are useful at the beginning of a year and at other times in classes where the children avoid using one another's names. These activities also aid listening skills, concentration and social co-operation. For these activities the children and teacher sit in a large circle so they can all see one another.

(i) The cumulative name game

One person begins by saying his or her name; the next person repeats the first name and then adds his or her own name; the third person repeats the first two names and adds his or her own name; and so on:

1st person – *Lisa* (naming herself)
2nd person – *Lisa, John*
3rd person – *Lisa, John, Wayne*
4th person – *Lisa, John, Wayne, Maree*

Depending on the children's ability to remember each other's names, this activity can either include the whole class in one list, or a new start can be made when the list is six or seven names long.

(ii) Rolling a ball

The teacher says one child's name and rolls the ball along the floor to that child; the child thanks the teacher, says someone else's name and rolls the ball to him or her:

e.g.: Teacher: *Tony!*
Tony: *Thanks Mr Smith. Lisa!* (he rolls the ball to Lisa)
Lisa: *Thank you, Tony. John!* (she rolls the ball to John)
John: *Thanks, Lisa. Wayne!* – (and so on).

Variations of this game include throwing and catching a bean-bag, a soft toy or a small object.

(iii) Introducing a friend

The children are asked to introduce one person to the class, giving the person's name and a few brief comments or facts about that person. The person introduced, thanks the first person and introduces someone else:

e.g.: 1st person – *I'd like to introduce Mary Black who lives at Sunnyside. Mary plays netball and likes watching 'Prisoner'.*
Mary Black – *Thanks Jill. I'd like to introduce Phillip Jones. Phil plays basketball and barracks for the Seagulls.*
Phil Jones: – *Thanks Mary. I'd like to introduce . . .* – etc.

Until the students feel more confident in making introductions, they may need the security of knowing what kind of comments to make. The teacher might suggest some of the following:

- the person's favourite sport or hobby, particular interest, position in the family, etc.
- where the students hardly know one another, it may be useful to ask them to talk to a classmate they do not know for two minutes, before the activity begins.

TALKING AND LISTENING ACTIVITIES

There are numerous talking and listening games to be found in drama and language books and although they may occasionally be useful, used frequently, or in isolation, they become no more than time fillers. So much really useful talking and listening goes on in a classroom when the program is geared to the children's interests and needs, and when the attitude of the teachers is genuinely caring, that language games become unnecessary. However, some language and co-operation activities provide a useful means of bringing a group together, and can lead into drama and story-building activities. The activities described on the following pages have been found to be valuable and provide useful starting points for work in other areas of the speech and drama program.

These activities can and should be adapted to the children's stage of development and to their interests. Objects, topics and interests which are current in the classroom can be extended through these activities. They can also be used to introduce new topics.

(i) Descriptions

These activities can be adapted to pairs, small or large groups and can take many forms e.g.: building up a description of a place from a well-known fable or fairytale e.g. the house of the three bears, the house of the three little pigs, Cinderella's coach or ball-gown.

- describing a person or object present in the room, outside the window, or a person or object not visible at that moment but known to most of the group.
- describing an historic building, tool, costume from a picture.
- describing accurately how to carry out some task, or the route from home to school.
- describing one particular place after an excursion e.g. one child might recall and describe a big tree he or she remembers vividly.

Those listening to the description should be able to visualise or recognise the person, object or place without it being specifically named.

(ii) Trading cards

This activity can be used to introduce or reinforce a particular topic, or extend vocabulary, as well as leading into story-building and discussion. The teacher will need a set of 8-10 cards for each small group of children (3-5 in a group), or larger sets for larger groups. One topic or aspect of a topic is prepared for each group. For example:

- if members of the class have been learning about the Vikings, sets of cards could be made under the headings of 'Viking house', 'Viking boat', 'clothing', 'food', 'Viking forge'. Eight to ten items belonging to each topic are written onto the cards – one card for each item, e.g. for the topic 'Viking forge', individual cards might read *anvil, tongs, hammer, bellows, sword, shield, helmet, file*, plus one blank card.

- All the cards are mixed up, shuffled and divided equally between the groups. Each group is also given a blank card.
- Each group discusses their cards, decides what to keep and what to put aside for trading (swapping).
- Teacher and children decide how the trading session is to take place. To avoid chaos, they might decide to allow groups, one by one, to have a turn to trade with others. Each trading session should be very brief.
- When trading is over, each group must justify the items they have, including any they failed to get rid of during trading; the cards could be divided between the members of the group giving each person two or more items to talk about; the blank card can be any important item the group decides they need, or is missing. If a group is left with cards which obviously belong to another set, they must be woven into the story or justified somehow.
- Each group tells its story, or tells about its list, either to another group *or* to the whole class.
- Other members of the class can question group members or ask for further explanations.

If sets of cards are made for a number of totally unrelated topics, more opportunities are likely to arise for ingenious justification, e.g. if the topic is 'A Picnic' and someone is left with 'a telephone directory' (possibly belonging to the topic 'Post Office'), he or she must try to work out a reason for having taken the telephone directory on a picnic! Used with older children it gives opportunities for highly improbable but plausible stories. Used with younger children (e.g. grades 3-4), it leads into the planning activity and is a useful sorting activity involving discussion and the beginnings of story-building.

(iii) **Planning and discussions**

Children enjoy discussing an excursion or school event such as a sports day, school camp, fair, etc. Small groups of children might work together to:

(a) prepare a short list
  - of items required for going camping
  - of unusual or different sporting events
  - of items for different stalls at the fair

(b) discuss or plan
  - next time we go on a camp, where should we go?
  - what changes could be made in our next sports day – and why?
  - what could have happened if we hadn't found John by teatime the day he took the wrong path and got lost at Waddamana?

(c) discuss, plan and extend their interest in other areas of the curriculum or topics of current interest; these might include:
  - a topic related to work going on in the school, e.g. building or repairs; making a list of what we would need to build a cubby house, or club house in the school grounds

- a social science topic, e.g. making a list of items the early Australian explorers would have had to take with them or a list of belongings a young immigrant would have brought from England in 1880.
- an excursion, e.g. to the local post office and making a list of items we would need if we were going to set up a post office.

For older children and secondary students the activity could be more complex, e.g.:
- draw up a list of items needed by a small party of explorers to the South Pole in about 1910.
- draw a rough plan of your ideas for community use of a vacant block of land in your neighbourhood
- draw a rough map of the island you have landed on (in a drama activity).

All these tasks involve talking, listening to other's viewpoints, making compromises and coming to some agreement about a basic plan or idea. This activity has obvious extensions into drama and story-building. During these activities the teacher would need to spend time with each group asking questions that would get them thinking, speculating and beginning to appreciate some of the problems involved in their planning. The teacher's questions might include:
- *What time of the year might it be?* (i.e. when the expedition sets out).
- *Why would they choose that ime of the year to go?*
- *How might they travel?*
- *Who would use the sports ground you have planned?*
- *How much ground would a football-ground take?* – etc.

This would lead the children to begin asking probing questions of one another.

(iv) Receiver stations

This activity involves using language cues only and using language specifically to explain, instruct and describe. It also gives opportunities for children to question, i.e. to become aware of the information they have not been given and need to know.

The group sits in a circle and the teacher explains that he or she is the radio control station and that each person is a receiver station. Each person adopts a station name and a call-up signal is decided upon. The teacher has a simple drawing or plan which he or she intends to transmit to the receiver stations. It is often useful if the instructions the teacher sends out are brief and not entirely explicit. The children are then encouraged to call up the control station to ask a question about the information given. The idea of the Receiver Station, is to provide a control so that children can only speak one at a time. The teacher has a simple diagram in front of him or her which is going to be transmitted to the children, each of whom has a pencil and paper. The procedure is something like this:

Control station (teacher): *Calling all stations – stand by for further information about the water reservoir* (or tank or pond) *that the Water Authority has suggested you build. Here are the instructions for drawing the plan – first of all draw a line across your paper.*

Station Waterford: *Beep-beep, Waterford calling.*
Control station: *Come in Waterford.*
Station Waterford: *Is this line parallel to the bottom of the page?*
Control station: *Not quite.*
Station Freer: } *simultaneously* *Beep-beep, Freer calling.*
Station Blount: } *Beep-beep, Blount calling.*
Control station: *Come in Freer.*
Station Freer: *Could you tell us more about this line – how far is it from the bottom of the page – please give us measurements.*
Control station: *The line begins on the left-hand side of your paper, two centimeters from the bottom and runs straight to a point on the right-hand edge of the page, five centimeters from the bottom. Now along that line mark two points, five centimeters from the edges of the page.*
Station Blount: *Beep-beep, Blount calling.*
Control station: *Come in Blount.*
Station Blount: *Is one point five centimeters from the right along the line and the other five centimeters from the left of the page?*

–and so on until the drawings are completed and they are compared with the teacher's drawing and the instructions are discussed.

This activity can be varied by placing it within a variety of settings, e.g. the children are police officers receiving a diagram of some strange lost object, or the diagram of the route taken by someone lost or wanted, or even an 'identikit'-type portrait of a person. Older students may be able to take the monitor radio role, and work in several small groups.

These activities are particularly suited to older primary school children and secondary students; they encourage the use of explicit instructions and descriptions, and a recognition of the variety of possible interpretations – or misinterpretations – that could be made from certain directions, and therefore the kinds of questions they need to ask in order to clarify the instructions.

It is obvious too, how the activities could lead into story-building and drama. For example:
• the children are people on outlying farms, who having received the simple diagram, proceed to call in with other information, requests etc. The teacher could give a focus by asking for a particular kind of information and suggesting a minor problem; for example:
– *There have been heavy rains in the mountains.*

- *Has the river risen at all since the day before?*
- *How has it affected the farmlands?* (the shearing, the harvest, etc.)

• The teacher could direct various children to other farms to help the farmers with a problem. The activity could then develop into active drama as groups begin, for example, to move stock, goods or machinery away from the rising river.

(v) Blind walk

An activity to develop trust between members of the group, listening skills and concentration.

• In pairs: one partner guides the other, who has his or her eyes closed (or is wearing a blindfold), round the room:

- using touch only i.e. blind partner holds arm of sighted partner
- using voice and touch i.e. sighted partner gives blind partner instructions and describes objects in the room and may encourage blind partner to stop and explore objects
- using voice only i.e. sighted partner stands beside or slightly behind blind partner, who moves according to spoken directions
- using a light touch only i.e. partners move about using finger-tip touch only.

In all these activities the sighted partner must make sure that the blind partner is safe from bumping into other people or objects in the room. Partners can change over when it seems appropriate. These activities lead to most interesting discussions as the children talk about how they felt and what they could sense during the time they were blind. They will be able to discuss which method of being guided they found most helpful.

The discussion will possibly include experiences of and attitudes toward blind people and towards other handicapped people.

Once the group have become more sensitive to one another, the numbers of blind people can be increased and they can be encouraged to move about being alert to all the clues that suggest they are near other people or objects and learn to avoid them.

A further development of this activity might be:

• An imaginary walk.

(i) Take your blind partner for a walk – decide *where* you are walking – describe the place to him or her as you walk – guide your blind partner carefully.

(ii) You are in some dark place. You know the place, your partner does not. Where might you be? Guide your partner safely through this dark place.

This imaginary walk could lead into story-building or drama, as pairs working together decide:

- *why* they are moving through this place
- *who* they are
- *what* they expect to find, (or what they found) at the end of the journey.

In these activities, words which the children do not fully understand become apparent at once, and so teachers or fellow class members have opportunities to explain meanings more fully to extend learning in any topic. As the activity proceeds, the children have the opportunity to use the new words they have just learned.

Although there are other useful activities and games to promote co-operation and communication skills, it is usually more profitable to spend time talking purposefully, building stories, doing drama, and using the other arts to express feelings and ideas than to base a program on talking and listening games. The next section gives a number of suggestions for ways in which story-building can be approached.

STORY-BUILDING AND TELLING

Story as 'an act of mind'

As conscious human beings, we are constantly involved in taking in impressions of the world, noting what happens, remembering people and events, and becoming aware of reactions, our own and other's, to all these impressions. In order to make some sort of order out of this kaleidoscope of impressions we try to express them through various ways. There are many symbol systems that we use, such as the two and three dimensional representations of the visual arts, the language of music and dance, as well as the language of words used in poetry, stories and drama.

The most common means of expressing our ideas, thoughts and feelings is through stories. We all tell ourselves stories all the time – and some of these stories we may tell to others. These stories may involve planning the grocery list for this afternoon's visit to the supermarket, or going over what happened yesterday in the staffroom and perhaps changing some of the events so that our memory of them becomes more acceptable or comfortable for our egos! Storying involves remembering, dreaming, imagining and planning. Through stories we make and find meanings from the stream of uncertain, interrupted, unpredictable and often apparently meaningless happenings that make up our lives. Also we tell stories in order to change events, remaking the past by selecting, discarding and reordering our memories; we look back in order to go forward.

Story is the most common and direct of all the art forms because it is primarily an 'act of mind'.[1] This 'act of mind' has been transferred from life to art in the form of narratives of all kinds, embracing fact and fiction, reality and fantasy. It is therefore the most accessible means of expression we have. It is but a step from the storying we all do naturally, to the more deliberate, perhaps more formalised story-building and telling that is being suggested here as a valuable activity for children.

The importance of stories within children's education, both listening to and telling them

When we realise the fundamental nature of storying, its benefits to children are obvious. Not only does it encourage and develop their ability to use and appreciate language, but it develops and extends their ability to select and order events and impressions, an ability which is basic to the development of abstract thinking.

Stories develop expectations relating to cause and effect. It is through story, more than any other means, that children begin to understand that events are caused by people and personalities; that is, they begin to understand the vital role that people play in shaping events, that most events are not arbitrary or haphazard, and that it lies within the means of most people to shape and change the world they live in.

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[1] Hardy Barbara, 'Towards a poetics of fiction' in Meek, M. et al. eds. *The Cobweb*, Bodley Head, 1977. pp. 12-23

Stories engage children's interest in and curiosity about all that makes up the human condition. Through the myths and legends of world literature they are introduced to the universal life themes that have occupied men's minds throughout human history. Through these and other stories such as folk tales and historical narrations, they learn about their own culture, its customs and values.

Because stories heighten, isolate and analyse the emotions and concerns of human consciousness, they are a most potent means by which children come to terms with fears and anxieties. They are able to identify with the characters in a story they hear or make up, yet at the same time the fact that it is a story and therefore outside themselves, enables them to put a safe distance between their own emotions and those portrayed in the story. They are able to enter vicariously into the experience of others, while at the same time preserving their privacy of thought and emotional response. Story ensures the security of both the giver or teller and the receiver or listener; it holds both parties 'safe in the detachment of experience'.[2]

When listening to stories read and told, children develop expectations about the patterns of written and spoken language which are invaluable to them in their own oral and written expression. They also develop expectations about plots and story-lines, e.g. 'What might happen next?'. They become aware of modes of language, words and phrases that might appropriately be used in particular contexts.

The teacher's responsibility in telling and reading stories to children

Children need to hear a wide variety of poems and stories, both read and told. The richer the teacher's or helping adult's experience of literature, the more confidently and enthusiastically he or she is able to share the delight of books, stories and poems with children. The stories told and read to children should include selected myths, legends and folk stories of world literature.

Listening to stories and poems told and read, is one of the most valuable experiences that adults and children can share and should be part of each child's school day.

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[2] C. & M. Rosen, *Language of Primary School Children*, Penguin 1973, p. 191

STORY-BUILDING

Besides a varied input of stories told and read, the children benefit from opportunities to make and tell stories individually and in groups. **Story-building gives children opportunities for:**

- telling stories they have made up
- developing a sense of the kinds or 'frames' of stories
- developing a sense of beginnings and endings, and of story-lines or the sequence of events
- reflecting on a personal experience
- speculating about what might happen, what might have happened or what might happen next
- developing self-confidence in speaking to others
- learning to co-operate with others – to listen to them, to consider thoughtfully what others say.

Organisation

It is a good idea to sit in a big circle so everyone can see everyone else. The children either take turns around the circle, or the teacher can ask for volunteers; at the beginning the former is quicker, provided children know that they can say 'Pass' if they cannot think of anything to contribute. A focus such as a picture, object, sound etc. is useful.

The teacher's (or adult's) role in group story-building is:

- to establish story-building as an enjoyable activity
- to provide a focus for starting a story
- to listen attentively
- to communicate enthusiasm
- to ask thought-provoking questions
- to keep the story-line moving, by quickly selecting one idea from the many suggestions being made
- to act as co-ordinator in helping children to select and sequence ideas, and to find beginnings and endings
- to help children identify the type of story being built:
  e.g. if the ideas given so far are realistic then a suggestion to solve a difficulty by introducing a Martian in a purple space bubble would probably be inappropriate; however, in a story about a bunyip or other fantasy character, this suggestion might be suitable. Similarly, the teacher can help children to look back on and recall the story so far, and decide if it should have a happy or sad ending. (Sometimes the various endings can be discussed and the children individually can decide on the ending they like.) When reflecting on the story so far, the children's attention can be drawn to features which taken together, may evoke a mood or atmosphere which can be further developed. They can be led to see what sorts of implications the mood or atmosphere suggests for further events or an ending.
- to give children some opportunities to build **and recall** details, i.e. to retell some sections:
  e.g. 'Can someone remember all we've said about the old man's house?' Recall opportunities should

be introduced with discretion – not overdone so as to slow up the story when it is getting exciting – nor should they be allowed to drag the story out or become a punishment for a child who may have been inattentive:

- do not let the story ramble or go on too long, but encourage the children to find an ending
- retell the story right through, when it has been completed by the group, and tell it in such a way that the children will be encouraged to tell stories themselves
- act as a model storyteller.

Starting points for group story-building

• USING AN OBJECT, e.g. a small bottle, a shoe, a small box, a purse, a spectacle case, an umbrella etc.

- Pass the object round the circle; ask each person to say one thing they notice about it, e.g. it's green; it's got a pattern on it, etc.
- After five to seven comments have been made, ask the next person or volunteer, to recall all that has been said so far – let others help him if he can't remember all the comments.
- Ask the next person to suggest who might have owned the object. The next four or five children could be asked to suggest other owners; the teacher should choose one and ask the next person to begin describing the chosen owner of the object. Four or five people add to the description of the owner.
- The next person is asked where the owner lived – four to six children add descriptive phrases about the place.
- The teacher then asks, *'Why was this object so precious or so important to him or her?'*
- *'What happened – and how could our story end?'*

The teacher should try to keep the children's interest by not letting the list of descriptive comments get too long. The story can be helped along by the teacher's questions and quick choices made from the suggestions the children give. Occasionally the teacher might ask someone to recall all that has been said up to that point. Sometimes the story might be left unfinished and each child could make up his or her own ending.

Teachers can use a variety of objects that the children can imagine to be something else, e.g. a leather strap – what might it be? a snake, a whip, a coil spring, a lasso, a giant's shoelace, a tie etc. Other useful objects for this activity are: a small strip of carpet, a scarf or piece of fabric, a ruler, a piece of paper. Children are most inventive and usually respond eagerly to this sort of imaginative challenge.

• SOUNDS. A single sound or a brief sound pattern can be used to stimulate a story, e.g.:

- a knock on the door – who might be knocking? Who is on the other side of the door? What might happen?

- a brief pattern of drum beats or taps on rhythm sticks – what might the sound be? What does it remind you of?

• MOVEMENT. Brief movement sequences developed while exploring body movements can be used for story-building, e.g. locomotion (different ways of moving across the working space). The teacher could ask, *'Where could we be?', 'Who are we?', 'Why are we here?', 'What are we doing?', 'What happened or happens next?', 'How could the story end?'.*

THREE STORY FRAMEWORKS

(a) **The lost-found story**
- Who owns it? (describe the person, etc).
- How did he or she lose it?
- Who might have found it?
- What might happen next?
- Did the owner get it back – if so, how? If not, what happened?
- How might our story end?

(b) **The ordinary-unusual story**
- Who might own this object?
- What might the owner do each day? (establish what usually happened).
- But one day something different happened – what was it?
- What happened next – and how could our story end?

(c) **The journey story**
- The person who owns this object has to go on a journey – I wonder why?
- Where might he live?
- Where did he have to go? Why?
- How might he travel?
- Whom did he meet?
- What might happen next? How could our story end?

These are just three suggestions. Other ideas will develop from the children and their interests and from the teacher's experience in formulating question frameworks on the lines of *'Who?, Where?, Why?, What happens?, How does it end?'*

Starting points for pair work

There are many starting points for pair work, in which one person tells a story to his or her partner, and then listens to the partner's story. Sometimes the teacher could tell the children that at the end of the session some of them might be asked to tell their partner's story to the class. This will encourage listening for a purpose. When doing this, it is best to choose a few volunteers – it can be very time consuming to have the whole class listening while each child has a turn and the children will soon get bored and restless.

(i) TELLING ABOUT THEIR OWN EXPERIENCES

It is important to help children to value the experiences they have had, and to realise that their experiences are worth talking about to others. This is particularly necessary in the case of children with a poor self-image and those who are shy and withdrawn.

We need to accept each child's experiences, however different from our own they are, as being part of that child and therefore interesting to others.

• a person, e.g.	– Can you think about an old person you know? Is there something interesting or different that they do? Why do you like (or remember) them? – Tell about a friend you have – why you like him or her? What you enjoy doing together.
a location	– Can you remember a door, stairs, a window? Why do you remember it specially? What happened there? – A cubbyhouse you liked – where was it? What did you do there? – Can you think of a tree that was special to you? Why do you remember it so well? Tell your partner about it. – A house you remember – what was it like? Who lived there?
• weather and associated events	– Can you remember a very windy night? – Or a time when it snowed? – Or a bush fire? Was it near your house? – What happened? – A heavy rainstorm.
• a journey	– In a train, car, aeroplane. – Some other way, e.g. have you ever been on a trip/journey not in a car, aeroplane or bus? – Who did you go with – how and where did you go? – What happened?
• time	– Something that happened yesterday, last week, long ago (and long ago when you were very little).

(ii) PICTURES, BOOKS AND TELEVISION PROGRAMS can lead to story-building and discussions

- portraits
  - What might this person do?
  - Where might he live?
  - What can you tell about him from the picture?
  - What story could we make up about him?
- pictures
  - What is happening in this picture?
  - Who are these people?
  - What might have happened before this? (whatever is being depicted).
  - What could happen next?
- a story or television program
  - Speculations: What might have happened if . . .?
  - Reflecting and finding reasons for character and events, e.g. Why do you think the boy stole things?
  - Why do people steal?
  - Take one incident which is mentioned briefly in the story and elaborate it, e.g. The story tells us that he visited an uncle on a farm – what sort of things do you think he did on the farm?
  - Could we make a story about an adventure or journey, exciting or mysterious event during that holiday?
  - Retell part of the story through the person of one of the characters, e.g. How might one of Cinderella's ugly sisters tell a friend about the visit from the prince's servant who tried to find the owner of the glass slipper?
  - Take a favourite character from a story and make up a new adventure.

(iii) OBJECTS

The story frame examples shown on page 16 can be used to advantage in pair story-building from objects.

- They can pretend to be experts knowing all about:
  - an old object or picture and its history
  - a strange-looking, not easily identified object and its uses.

(iv) HISTORICAL EVENTS or famous fictional moments told by an 'eyewitness'

Material from literature, social science and many other areas of the curriculum can be used.

(v) NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS

- Older children can be asked to work in pairs or small groups to make up a story:
  - from a brief newspaper headline or advertisement, e.g. why might this house for sale? Who owned it? What happened?
  - from newspaper pictures (usually without the captions), as described in (ii).

STORY-BUILDING AND TELLING WITHIN A DRAMA FRAMEWORK

Storytelling not Dramatisation

The basis of storytelling is the recounting of a narrative, not dramatising the story by turning it into an improvised or scripted play. Although it is possible to use different voices for direct speech, or to tell a story in role or with puppets, teachers and students should not lose sight of the fundamental ingredient of storytelling i.e. narrative; the recounting and elaboration of events.

Drama as a stimulus for story-building

Stories can be developed from the enthusiasm and interest generated by a group drama. e.g. Once a drama about a tribe or community has been established (this type of drama may develop over a number of sessions), the group could gather, as members of the tribe, to tell stories of the past. The material for the stories would call upon the information generated by the drama and the children's imaginations as they 'remembered' the history of the tribe, or tales told by past members of the tribe. One way to initiate such group stories would be to pass a stone or other object round the circle: *'This stone is sacred and very precious to our tribe – can you remember a time when this stone helped you – or one of your ancestors?'* or *'This bead necklace has been in our tribe for many moons – he who wears it dreams a strange dream – what did you dream when you wore it?'* This would initiate individual stories.

Storytelling using a drama setting

Older students are able to tell known stories or make their own stories and use a common setting to link them together in groups. These stories are told in role, that is, as characters appropriate to the chosen setting, e.g.:

- The King of the Leprechauns and his followers tell Irish folk tales.
- Old men of the tribe hold a corroboree around a fire to tell each other tales of the Dreamtime.
- Ulysses and his friends discuss old times and tell the stories of their adventures.
- A group of explorers tell of past adventures while sheltering from a blizzard.

Students using the idea of a common setting might explore ways of using lighting, costumes, props, music etc.to enhance the atmosphere of the stories.

Stories told in role by individuals, pairs or small groups add interest for both the tellers and the listeners.

Adopting a different viewpoint

Well known stories can be told in role from the point of view of one of the characters, e.g. 'Jack and the Beanstalk' told by Jack's mother or the giant's wife: 'The Sleeping Beauty' told from the point of view of the handsome prince or the wicked fairy: 'Snow White' told by the huntsman or one of the dwarfs.

SUMMARY

When planning a program of storytelling activities, it is a good idea to make it as varied as possible to include:

- story-building from various starting points
- story-building with an emphasis on interesting or unusual ways to begin or end stories
- listening to stories told and read competently by the teacher and others, stories on record or tapes
- storytelling in role
- storytelling in groups
- storytelling with an emphasis on use of voice and trying out vocal effects
- storytelling using effects (stressing that light, music etc.should be used with subtlety and restraint)
- storytelling to a small audience of students or younger children
- storytelling to a variety of listeners.

EXTENSIONS

Stories may prompt some children to further activities; others may wish to reflect upon them at leisure.

Having built, told or listened to a story some children might be motivated to extend the story in a variety of ways.

- Variations on the story might include telling or writing:
  - what might have happened later?
  - what might have happened *if* . . .: (e.g. *if* it had been winter, *if* the truck had broken down, *if* the helicopter had not seen the stranded children, etc.)
  - what could have happened before the story began?
  - how might the farmer (or other character) have told the story to his wife when he got home?
  - alternative endings.
- Art work. Using two or three-dimensional materials to interpret or represent a particular moment in the story, a character or event. This might be done individually or in groups, for example:
  - using boxes to construct vehicles, houses, a palace etc. which has been or could become a focus for a story
  - painting a mural depicting the events of a story
  - constructing a machine out of a variety of materials after having made or heard a story about a strange machine
  - constructing a big string web as an extension to a story about a spider.
- Drama, movement sequences and verbal dynamics could develop from elements of the story. Examples of these activities appear in the Drama and Expressive Movement segments of the Speech and Drama Framework.
- Sound stories. A story or some of the events in a story can be interpreted in sound (*see* Sound Exploration) using voices, simple instruments and objects of many kinds. In this activity the children are encouraged to build up a sound picture which reflects not only the main events or a selected event, but also the mood or atmosphere of the story. Activities of this kind give children opportunities to learn how to handle and control volume, pace and pitch, and how to balance sound with silence. From this point the teacher can extend children's awareness to these same aspects in relation to their use of voice in storytelling.

TELLING A STORY

The great value of telling a story rather than reading it aloud, lies in the complex communication between the storyteller and his or her audience. A sensitive awareness of the interaction and response between the storyteller and the listeners encourages the storyteller to select words and a style of narration which suits both the material being used and the audience.

When telling a story developed through group story-building, the teacher as storyteller must draw the events together and retell the story in such a way as to create atmosphere, to highlight the humour, suspense or climax of the story as well as retaining the original sequence built up by the children. When individual children are asked to retell a story, they should be encouraged to retain the loose sequence of the original; thus one of the skills of storytelling involves remembering *what happens* and *what happens next.*

However, much of the value of the activities lies in the storyteller's embroidery, that is, in the way he or she expands the understanding of the listener, being aware of the needs of the listener. In this way the storyteller makes the story his own.

Elaboration and embroidery of a story are tied very closely to vocal technique, that is, the way we use the instrument (the voice), to play the tune (the story).

The art of storytelling

When children have a background of story-building and some experience of telling stories, both their own and traditional stories, a more deliberate emphasis can be placed on storytelling as an art form. Through reading and telling traditional myths, legends and folk tales of many cultures, as well as through story-building, they begin to appreciate and to use elements such as:

- climax
- traditional or original beginnings and endings
- patterning and repetition.

They become more aware of the power of words and begin to use words in unusual and vivid ways to create clearer images in the minds of their listeners. They begin to manipulate words and voice to create effects of suspense, surprise, humour and pathos. After continuous experience of storytelling activities, older children will become more aware of the power and flexibility of their voices and will begin to experiment with their voices. At this stage the use of a tape recorder which will allow them to evaluate and criticise their experiments will do much to heighten their awareness of voice as an instrument for lively storytelling.

The use of voice and gesture

As they begin to appreciate and gain skill in using storytelling as an art form, students can be helped to use their voices more effectively. They need to become aware of aspects of voice such as:

- **pace** – the way variations of speed can be used to create suspense, excitement and a variety of emotions
- **volume** – to create effects of gentleness, peace, fear, tension or power, strength, etc
- **pitch** – variations of pitch are most useful in characterising voices (i.e. direct speech)
- **pause** – pauses of varying lengths can be used to heighten suspense, humour and pathos.

With experience they will learn that all these elements can be manipulated to gain and hold attention and to create the successive images of the story in the minds of their listeners.

All these aspects are explicitly discussed and illustrated in work with secondary students when they have had experience of story-building.

By seeing and hearing good storytellers and from their own experience, students will come to understand the place of gesture, facial expression (particularly the expressiveness of the eyes), and position (relationship to the audience), in effective storytelling. Both gesture and facial expression need to be a natural outcome of the storyteller's involvement with the story, and should never be superimposed or done half-heartedly. When this happens the artificiality or awkwardness of the gesture is obvious and detracts from the story. Storytelling is a subtle interaction of the story itself, the instrument (i.e. the voice and personality of the teller), and the audience.

Relationship between the storyteller and the listeners

First of all, the storyteller should be fairly close to the listeners who should be sitting fairly close to one another. It often helps to have the storyteller slightly raised above the listeners, e.g. the storyteller might sit on a dias, or on a rostrum block if the audience are on the floor or on low chairs. Storytelling needs a friendly and relaxed atmosphere and therefore if the storyteller is confronting an audience of strangers, e.g. when an older student tells a story to a group of young children, the storyteller might need to make a short informal introduction, or ease him or herself into the situation in some way to create rapport with the listeners before the story itself is told. This 'easing in' might involve a chat with the group, asking them about stories they enjoy, or singing a song together (possibly a song with some connection to the story).

When telling a traditional folktale, myth or legend, it is often useful to develop interest and concentration by briefly telling the listeners something of the background to the story, the culture, or ask them to imagine a setting, i.e. 'Let's pretend we are all sitting round a small fire in the desert listening to stories – it is quiet and getting dark – soon the sky will be bright with stars – over yonder to the south we will see the Southern Cross. Listen to the story of Mululu and his daughers.' Other ideas for settings are found on page 19 . Not only does a setting heighten the effectiveness of the story but it increases the interest of the audience and can bring them imaginatively closer to the origins of the story.

Important points for the storyteller

- The storyteller should:
  - choose a story he or she likes and enjoys telling
  - know the story and feel at ease telling it
  - position him or herself fairly close to the listeners
  - try to create a relaxed and friendly atmosphere
  - try to communicate enthusiasm for the story, and use voice, gesture and facial expression to engage the imagination of the audience.

LISTENING WITH A PURPOSE

Before children have grasped some of the skills of storytelling it is best to avoid the situation where a number of children take turns to tell individual stories to the whole class. If the stories ramble on, as they often do, the listeners will become bored and restless. In the early stages therefore children's attention can be held by asking them to contribute to a group story-building activity, or to work in pairs. When building a story, the teacher can encourage the children to remember the events, or descriptive phrases that have been suggested, by stopping occasionally and asking a volunteer to recount the story up to that point.

- It is often helpful to give the listeners a specific purpose for listening. They might be in role as:
  - newspaper reporters or feature writers for a magazine, radio or television program
  - fellow historians – who might ask questions
  - members of a tribe.
- They might be asked to pick out the one true story from a group of three or four stories about an object, and to justify their choice.
- They might be asked to listen specifically for:
  - the build-up of an atmosphere or mood
  - the word picture of a location or character
  - the build up towards the climax or resolution.

LEARNING BY LISTENING TO GOOD STORYTELLERS
ENJOYMENT OF STORIES

LEARNING BY LISTENING TO GOOD STORYTELLERS

Often it will be the teacher who retells the stories built by the group and therefore the teacher becomes an important model for the children. Because narrative of many kinds is the teacher's main language mode, it is not unreasonable to expect teachers to be competent storytellers. However, it is a good idea to have not only a wide variety of stories but also some variety of storytellers. Other possibilities are:

- visiting adults with interesting stories to tell
  - an elderly person who can tell about *'When I was your age.'* or *'What I remember about my school days.' – etc.*
- recordings and tapes of competent storytellers
- professional or semi-professional storytellers (the local library might be able to help by providing the names of likely storytellers.)

After listening to a well-told story, the children's attention could be drawn to the way in which the storyteller used contrasts of volume, pause, pace and vocal tone.

ENJOYMENT OF STORIES

It is important for children to hear a variety of stories read and told from kindergarten to grade ten. It is sometimes assumed that reading or telling stories to older students is unnecessary because they are able to read them for themselves, but there is no substitute for the personal sharing of a story well-told by the teacher or visiting adult. The feelings of suspense, action, joy, humour and wonder are made more enjoyable and real in the exchange between teller and listener. The telling of and the listening to stories is an important part of the oral tradition from which our literature and culture has developed.

> **'Storytellers are indispensable agents of socialisation. They picture the world for the child and thus give both form and limits to his memory and imagination.'**
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> – David Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd*[3]

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[3] Riesman, David, *The Lonely Crowd*, Yale University Press, 1950.

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First series:

T 1439 Animals from South East Asia from *Animal Story Book* by Anita Hewett, London, Bodley Head, 1972 and Young Puffin Books, Penguin, 1974
- (a) The stamping elephant
- (b) The tree trick
- (c) Happy black grackle

T 1440 Australian Animals from *Animal Story Book* by Anita Hewett, London, Bodley Head, 1972 and Young Puffin Books, Penguin, 1974
- (a) Honey mouse
- (b) Koala's walkabout
- (c) The strange tail of quail
- (d) The laughing bird

T 1441 African Animals from *Animal Story Book* by Anita Hewett, London, Bodley Head, 1972 and Young Puffin Books, Penguin, 1974
- (a) Mr and Mrs Ostrich
- (b) Elephant big and elephant little
- (c) Small gorilla and the parsley
- (d) A piece of yellow string

T 1442 Paul's Tale by Mary Norton from *A Golden Land*, ed. by James Reeve. London, Longman Young Books, 1958 and Young Puffin, Penguin, 1973

T 1443 Fantastic Mr Fox by Roald Dahl London, George Allen & Unwin, 1970 and Puffin Books, Penguin, 1973

T 1444
- (a) Moose by Michael Foreman. London, Hamish Hamilton, 1971
- (b) Jim and the Beanstalk by Raymond Briggs. London, Hamish Hamilton, 1970
- (c) A Lion in the Meadow by Margaret Mahy. London, Dent, 1969 and Puffin Picture Books, Penguin, 1972

T 1445
- (a) Obstreperous by Ted Greenwood. London, Angus and Robertson, 1970 and Puffin Picture Books, Penguin, 1974
- (b) May I Bring a Friend? by Beatrice Schenk de Regniers. Glasgow, Collins, 1966

T 1446 Stories from *A Necklace of Raindrops* by Joan Aiken. London, Cape, 1968
- (a) The baker's cat
- (b) The cat sat on the mat

T 1447 Roddy and the Red Indians from *A Golden Land*, ed. by James Reeve. Longman Young Books, 1958 and Young Puffin Books, Penguin, 1973

T 1448 The Serial Garden by Joan Aiken. from *Winter's Tales for Children*, ed. by Caroline Hillier, Melbourne, Macmillan, 1966

a framework for speech and drama

SOUND WORDS & POETRY

Tasmania Media Centre, Education Department, Hobart 1980

an introduction to speech and drama from kindergarten to lower secondary

The five supplementary booklets are entitled:

- An Introduction and Overview
- Expressive Movement
- Talking and Listening. Storybuilding and telling
- Puppetry and Constructions
- Drama

The material in this booklet has been prepared by
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Poetry should 'tickle the fancy', delight and move us both emotionally and intellectually. Poetry captures the essence of an experience, an emotion or scene, so that through the medium of poetry children can be made more aware of the world they live in, other people and themselves. Our aim in teaching poetry is to encourage a lifelong enjoyment of words and a curiosity and eagerness to sample writing of all kinds.

POEMS

In poems, our earth's wonders
Are windowed through
Words.

A good poem must haunt the heart
And be heeded by the mind of the
Hearer.

With a wave of words, a poet can
Change his feelings into cool, magical
mysterious
Mirages.

Without poetry, our world would
Be locked within itself – no longer
enchanted by the poet's
Spell.

-- *Peter Kelso* [1]

Like all good literature, poetry can give us fresh insights into ourselves, others and the world we live in, both the real and the imaginary. Poetry that is appealing and evocative strikes a note of truth and recognition in the reader or listener which helps him to understand his own feelings and emotions more fully. Teachers need to be aware of the fact that the child's learning is rooted in sensory and emotional experience. Through such experiences, children begin to discover more about people, objects and materials around them; they begin to develop a fresh, more sensitive awareness of their world.

> *Poetry is not only a way of saying. It is a way of looking at the world and responding to it.*[2]
>
> – Clive Sansom

Each of the arts contributes in a unique way to the child's understanding of himself and the world; the insights he glimpses through poetry will differ from those he will gain through any other experiences, and therefore they should be nurtured and encouraged.

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[1] *in* Kempster, M., Backhouse, M. and Turnbull, E. *eds. Verse by Young Australians.* Rigby, 1968. p. 65.

[2] Clive Sansom *Speech and Communication in the Primary School.* A. & C. Black, 1968. p. 104.

Contexts for language

As children examine and explore objects and materials, they become more aware of differences and similarities and begin to make connections between previously unconnected objects and events. As they try to find language to explore their ideas, emotions and intuitions aroused by these sensory experiences, they begin intuitively to use metaphorical and figurative language, with phrases such as *It's a bit like . . .; It looks like . . .*, to express their meaning with greater immediacy and clarity.

It is important therefore that the children have a wide variety of direct experiences inside and outside the classroom. These experiences might include, for instance:

- walking barefoot over grass, gravel and on concrete – and finding language to tell how it feels
- examining rocks, leaves, feathers etc. possibly using a hand lens, and discussing their appearance
- watching insects in a terrarium, fish in an aquarium, snails on a sheet of glass (when the glass with snails on it is inverted, the rippling movement of muscle is noticeable)
- walking through the bush after rain, noticing smells and textures as well as sounds and sights
- recalling and reflecting upon an excursion they have been on recently.

(See also 'Verbal Dynamics' in the *Expressive Movement* booklet.)

Sometimes it is a good idea to talk about the experience at the time, to find words to describe sensations and emotional reactions almost while they are happening; sometimes it is better to allow time for silent reflection and digestion of an experience. The children should also be able to choose the medium of response – at any rate, some of the time – so they will not all be responding to an experience in writing, or all painting, etc. but a variety of media will be used by different children to make statements about their personal reactions to an experience. Often this experience will grow in children's minds and become more vivid and memorable if they are able to connect it with poetry and stories they have heard, or poems that are introduced after the experience.

As well as hearing and reading poetry, children need opportunities to explore, select and sequence sounds and words and to experiment with and become more sensitive to the sound and power of words. The work discussed in the next two sections:

- sound exploration and
- word patterning

builds upon work suggested in 'Verbal Dynamics' in the *Expressive Movement* booklet and is based principally on sensory and recalled experience. These experiences play an important part in the development of the imagination, an important aspect of which is putting together elements of the known or familiar in new and original ways to create an imagined scene or event.

By sound exploration we mean activities which help children to become more aware of the range and variety of sounds they hear and sounds they can make in patterns for various purposes.

Need for silence

In order to become more aware of sounds, we need to appreciate silence. To help children to discover the attributes of sound and silence we need to consider the rhythm of the day and to plan a period of silence each day during which children either relax completely or read silently. The need for silence and relaxation is often overlooked in planning as we try to fit in everything expected of both teacher and children.

Through a variety of sound-making and listening opportunities children can learn to distinguish:

- loud and soft sounds
- sounds nearby and far away
- high and low sounds
- continuous and intermittent sounds
- fast and slow sound patterns
- a variety of repetitive rhythms
- the direction from which a sound is coming
- the instrument or means of sound-making
- one another's voices
- sounds heard in their natural environment; and who or what is making the sound.

Sound-making activities

As well as opportunities to make sound sequences working with their own ideas, it is important that children develop aural discrimination by means of activities aimed to make them more aware of qualities of sound and voice i.e. pitch, volume, sustained and cut-off sounds, tempo and a variety of rhythms.

Some of these activities might include:

(a) **Distinguishing sounds**

Shutting their eyes and pointing to the place from which the sound is coming, as the teacher or another child moves round quietly with a percussion instrument and plays a sound, using different instruments in this way. To this activity could be added:

- volume – loud and soft sounds
- pitch – high and low sounds

e.g. *listen to these two (or three) sounds, point to the direction from which you hear the loudest (or highest, etc.) sound.* This is quite a difficult activity and should not be sustained for more than a few minutes at a time.

(b) **Rhythms**

- Sitting in a circle, the children are asked to copy a simple hand-clap rhythm given by the teacher. Then one child is asked to clap a new simple rhythm (often children need something more concrete to work from and so they could be asked to clap their names).

- Identifying the instrument (or person) – *Point to the direction from which you hear the triangle (or Stephen's voice)*. In this activity three or four children would move about quietly while the others sit with their eyes closed.

(c) **Secret or kindred-sounds**

This is a useful activity which involves careful listening.

(i) The children are asked to work in pairs, and each pair is to develop a brief sound pattern which they can repeat and remember. Various sound materials can be used e.g. voices, body sounds, a simple percussion instrument, other materials – with one proviso, that the sounds can be heard distinctly from anywhere in the room.

- The partners separate to distant parts of the room. The children can either stand anywhere they happen to be after separating from their partners, or in a big circle, facing away from the centre of the room. They stand quite still with eyes shut while the teacher moves about quietly and touches a child, who makes his or her sound pattern once. The partner must reply by repeating the pattern immediately. The teacher touches another child, and so on. The activity can be made more complex as the children become better able to distinguish their sound patterns from the others.

Complexities could include:

- asking two children to move about quietly touching people, so two lots of sound patterns are occuring together or in quick succession

- speeding up the whole process, so patterns have to be identified within a complexity of patterns.

(ii) Alternatively the sound patterns developed by the pairs of children could be used as follows:

- ask the pairs to separate and move to opposite sides of the room

- ask everyone to close their eyes, and begin to make their sounds while they begin to move slowly about the room to find their partner by his or her sound pattern.

NOTE: This is quite a difficult activity and not suitable for very young or inexperienced children, as it demands not only careful listening, but consideration for and awareness of others as the children move about.

Variations of these activities might inlcude:

- restriciting the range of sounds used e.g. using only vocal sounds, or even vowels or consonants - e.g. patterns of long and short vowel sounds

- using the activity within a drama setting e.g. if the drama is about Indians – *What sounds would we hear in the forest where we are hidden? With a partner make a secret sound pattern that copies one of the sounds you hear e.g. a bird call, wind sound, etc.* The activity could then proceed as described in either activity.

The children will also need opportunities:

- to experiment with various sound-making materials including their own voices.

- to make short sound sequences which may focus on the sounds themselves, or involve communicating a meaning: for example, the sequence might involve using a combination of long and short sounds, beginning and ending with silence – or, a sequence of sounds, to convey the idea of water.

- to listen to sequences others have made and to have others listen to their sequence.
  This sharing of work should be used with discretion because if too much stress is placed on it the result may be shallow work, 'showing off' and a pre-occupation with performance rather than a thoughtful commitment to developing work of quality. It is also very time-consuming and frustrating to expect children to sit and listen to their peer's work for long periods of time.

- the children will also need opportunities to listen to sounds in their natural environment e.g. on an excursion to a farm – *Let's sit quietly with our eyes shut and listen to the sounds – notice whether the sounds are nearby or far away.*

Experimenting with sound

- This can be fairly random e.g. *Find some of the sounds you can make using anything in this room.*

- Have a sharper focus e.g. *Using only metal objects, find some of the different sounds you can make.*

- Sound-making can sometimes be restricted to body or vocal sounds.

- Percussion instruments (one per child) can be explored e.g. *Find two different sounds you can make using your percussion instrument.*

- Contrasts can be used for exploration, e.g. find a sound that can be kept going (or held for some time) and a short quick sound or *Find a high and a low sound you can make with your voice.*

- Brief sound patterns can be made e.g. *Make a pattern that you can remember and repeat, using hand-claps.*

- Recalling sounds heard e.g. on a visit to a farm – *How could we make sound sequences that remind us of one particular spot on the farm e.g. near the pond.*

Stories as a stimulus for sound-making

- Use an idea from a story e.g. making the sounds heard in *Good-night, Owl!* by Pat Hutchins[3] – letting the children work in small groups or pairs and taking one animal or bird per group and trying to obtain some variety within each pattern e.g. the bees buzzing, the squirrels cracking and crunching nuts, the crows cawing, the woodpecker, the starlings etc. Other useful stories could include those that featured storm, seasonal sounds, machinery sounds, night sounds and sea sounds.

These stories could be derived from story-building sessions, or books could be used (see the list of suggestions at the end of this booklet).

Experimenting with vocal sounds

Young children enjoy playing with sounds they can make with their voices:

- for example, they could be encouraged to find long sounds and quick, short sounds; smooth sounds and rough (e.g. 'l' as contrasted with 'gr')

- they could find a sound to go with various kinds of locomotion e.g. a sound to make with hopping – or with rolling, with running or jumping

- they could make a rhythmic pattern of repetitive sounds to move to e.g. skipping to 'k, k, k, k,' or skipping very quietly to 'p, p, p, p,' or they might use words to develop a rhythm of their own.

Students (secondary level) with more experience could make sound sequences

- exploring continuents and plosive consonants (those that can be held on and those that are cut short), long and short vowel sounds, consonants made with breath and voice etc.

- exploring the relationship between the sounds and qualities or moods they suggest such as weight i.e. strong and light, lively activity and sleepiness or laziness – e.g. making a sequence of lively sounds to give their idea of fun. This could be extended into group sequences to convey a particular mood, emotion or atmosphere, and could involve developing word-ladders (see next section on word patterning) as well as poems. With experience, groups would be able to combine a sound and movement sequence expressing a mood or atmosphere. Verbal dynamics could be used as well. Work such as this could form the basis of short dance dramas.

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[3] Hutchins, Pat *Good-night, Owl!* Puffin Books, 1975.

NOTE: It is important to remember that the work being discussed involves speaking aloud, that is, actually using the sounds, words and patterns being developed; it is not a pencil and paper activity.

Voice exercises – a caution

The emphasis in this work is on experimentation, sound discrimination and sequencing; at the same time the children are improving aspects of articulation and resonance. In the primary and lower secondary school any attempt to deal directly by giving children voice and articulation exercises in isolation from the children's interests, is likely to be unproductive in the exploration of sound and words. In the upper secondary school, technical and theoretical aspects of voice may be handled more directly, because by that time students should have a rich background of experience in most aspects of the speech and drama program.

Sequencing

- Often it is a good idea for the teacher to work with the whole group, until the children are more familiar with sound-making and better able to control it. In this case the teacher might ask each child to make up one brief sound pattern that he or she can remember and repeat it, then the teacher could 'orchestrate' the sounds by pointing to various children, who would make their sound patterns repetitively, until signalled to stop. This would enable the teacher to have some sounds repeated fairly continuously, while others were used to punctuate the other patterns. A number of sounds could be used simultaneously to bring about a climax. After some experience of this work the teacher could ask a child to be the 'conductor'.

- Children who have had some experience of working under the teacher's direction, would be able to work in pairs or small groups, either with a fairly limited range of sounds (e.g. all vocal sounds) or with a variety of sounds (e.g. one instrument per group, plus vocal and body sounds), and to make a short sequence of sounds, beginning and ending with silence.

The following suggestions could be adapted for use with any age group:

- Natural objects found in a particular area could be used to produce sound sequences related to that area or extending to other ideas e.g. using shells, pebbles, sticks, sand etc. found on the beach.

- Making a sound sequence to go with a short poem the children have written (see also Word Patterning), or arranging sounds (vocal or percussive) to punctuate or extend word-patterning.

- Making a vocal or melodic sound sequence to accompany a movement or verbal dynamic sequence.

- Making a sound sequence to use as a starting point to stimulate movement. Ask the children to listen for, and interpret in movement, long and short sounds, high and low sounds, fast and slow rhythms, so that their movement patterns have a focus. (See also *Expressive Movement* booklet.)

NOTE: From time to time students should be challenged to refine and develop work to a standard that both satisfies and extends them. This may involve a combination of sounds, words, movement or aspects of the visual arts.

Listening with a purpose

As in all other work, if the children have a focus for concentration they seem more able to listen; therefore it helps to listen with a purpose. For example:

- when listening to one another's work, those listening could be asked to close their eyes and think what the sounds remind them of – *what pictures does their sound pattern make in your mind? – what do the sounds make you think of?*

- *Can you describe the pattern their sounds make?*

- listen for high and low sounds or for a regular rhythm, for soft and loud sounds etc.

Extensions of sequencing and listening

- After discussion between groups, the sound sequences could be extended and refined in the light of suggestions and a pooling of ideas.

- A story or drama could be developed from the sound picture.

WORD PATTERNING

Language grows out of contexts, that is, language is stimulated by various experiences involving people, objects, creatures, emotions and ideas; therefore, in order to encourage language use and growth, varied contexts can be structured by the teacher through the introduction of interesting people and objects into the classroom. With regard to interesting objects, there are some useful ways to help children focus more directly on an object. It is a good idea to sit in a circle for some of these activities.

Word patterning activities

1. (a) Pass round an object, e.g. a fossil, rock etc. and ask the children just to use their sense of touch (with eyes closed), not to guess what it is but to explore it, and say one thing about it e.g. relating to size, texture, weight, shape etc. Children who cannot think of a word or phrase should be allowed to 'pass'.

   (b) Then use sight (possibly also a hand lens) and suggest more words e.g. relating to pattern, colour, texture, etc.

   (c) With some objects the other senses may be relevant and should be used as well e.g. hearing – rustling grasses.

With young children the teacher could write the words fairly large on slips of paper, which the children could then discuss, select, add to and rearrange to form a satisfying 'word-ladder' e.g.:

scratchy
smooth soft
downy
feather.

Older children could make their own selection of words from those on the slips of paper or the board and re-order these to make individual or group word-patterns. Sometimes the teacher could ask the children to think where the object could have been found, or to imagine it in a place. The place, or some description of a place, could be added to the words as well, e.g.:

light
crumbly
spidery patterns
jagged edges
raked together in a heap
dead leaves.

Sometimes children could make their own individual selection, additions and arrangements of the words, at other times they could do so as a group.

2. In working with older children, the idea of a place or setting for the object could be developed in some detail e.g. if the object is an old fence post or paling, the group or teacher might choose one of the various places or settings suggested e.g. 'deserted farm', for which the group would suggest further words and phrases. The teacher could help by asking questions such as *This old fence post is on a deserted farm – what picture do you see in your mind? – What season it it? What is the weather like? Is it night or day? What is near it?* etc.

Various combinations of words and phrases relating to the object and the setting could then be used, added to and arranged in a sequence. Some children might expand their sequences into short poems.

Children could work alone, in pairs or as a group.

3. Experiences such as walking over grass, gravel and cement, playing on the monkey bars etc. could be recalled and words describing sensations, similarities and differences could be found through discussion and used, e.g.:

monkey-bars
hard
shiny sticky
dizzy
tiring.

4. Children enjoy patterning words to make their own rhythm rhymes, for example, during a movement lesson, one group of children developed this walking rhyme:

I'm walking along the footpath
Walking ever so fast,
Walking because I want to
And I don't want to turn
into BRASS!

Another group made this skipping rhyme:

Skip, skip, skippity, skip,
The dolphin skips all day,
Skip, skip, skippity, skip,
He skips along the bay.

5. Nonsense words and rhymes appeal to children and they enjoy making up their own. Two examples of the sort of nonsense words and rhymes children enjoy making up and speaking are:

(a) *If I had a zul zul um-lum*
a zulum zulum-zoo.
I'd zul zul um-lum all day long
that's what I'd like to do.

zul zul um-lum, zul zul um-lum
zulum zulum – zoo

If you had a zulzul um-lum
You could join in too . . .

(b) *In the land of Chipermachucka*
Lived the Ooblymagoobly,
He was known as a blob blood-sucker,
And joogled on blood oh so droobly.

When Ooblymagoobly met Chili boombay
He globbed and glibbed in disdeck
He smidgened him out and spod in his way
And jongled him spig in the neck.

Often they can be helped to find a way into this activity by beginning with a particular sound or selection of sounds which they choose to express a particular mood or atmosphere. As they repeat and work on their rhymes they are exercising voice and articulation but doing so while experiencing the enjoyment of inventiveness and play.

Similarly they enjoy making up their own tongue-twisters from certain combinations of sounds, and they can be encouraged to use them and their nonsense rhymes to experiment with volume and pace.

Poetry making

Work in word patterning and sound exploration obviously lead to the children making their own poems. They derive added stimulation from speaking and hearing a rich variety of poetry which will extend their interest in the sounds and patterns of language and in the imagery used to express feelings and ideas. Building on sensory and emotional experiences, children begin to make their own poetic imagery and to appreciate the imagery of others. As their experience of poetry grows, they begin to notice how the poet is using language, how he is putting words together and how certain words are more effective than others in creating new and vivid images. They are beginning to understand figurative language and its power to evoke an emotional response.

Direct Experiences

After handling pine-cones brought back to school after an outing, the children in one class wrote these word patterns and poems which they spoke aloud to others in the class:

(group work
4 children)

PINE-CONE

It's prickly,
It bounces,
It's hard,
It has seeds –
Pine-cone.

(group work
4 children)

PINE-CONE

This is a little pine-cone.
It tickles,
It has seeds,
They blow out . . . everywhere!

Fun sentence (on seeing cones piled on a pink sandwich plate).

It's a pine-cone tree on a pink plate!

(group work
4 children)

PINE-CONES

Pine-cones feel
bendy,
smoothy,
prickly,
funny,
holey,
bumpy.
Pine-cones are
rough and smooth,
cream and brown,
soft and hard.
Pine-cones go
in and out.
They swing on trees,
They drop their seeds,
They grow young trees,
More pine-cones.

(group work
9 children:
memorised
and spoken)

PINE-CONE

It's hard but not heavy,
Its petals are very fragile.
It's spiky but not prickly.
It sounds like pop-corn
Cracking and popping –
It looks like a pine-tree.

These poems and word-patterns are printed with acknowledgement to the children from Acton Primary School.

Later, the teacher read *Pines* by William Hart-Smith (in Fowler, M. M. *ed. Land of the Rainbow Gold;* poetry for young Australians. Nelson, 1967) to the children. In this way their own experience, thoughts and feelings were sharpened and extended.

Working with simple forms

Some children find it useful to work to a specific form. Most teachers are familiar with the haiku form which encapsulates a single thought. Four other useful forms are given below:

1. Three-word poem

noun: *stalk*
verb: *quivers*
adverb: *delicately*

or,
using the same starting letter:
stalk
stands
stiffly.

2. List a few words describing an object – words discovered from using touch, taste, smell, sight, sound (whichever are appropriate).

From this list the words are re-arranged into the following form:

select and arrange in any order:
sight
sound
taste
touch
smell
subject

e.g.
sour
green
round
tangy
apple.

3. Cinquain – five lines as follows:

subject (noun) ______________
2 adjectives describing the subject, ___________, ___________
3 adjectives describing the subject, ___________, ___________, ___________
4-word phrase or clause about the subject, ___________, ___________, ___________, ___________
subject (same word or related word) ___________.

e.g.:
fire
crackling, smoking
hissing, sizzling, roaring
dying to glowing embers
ash.

4. Simple rhymed form:

four lines, two words to a line, the second and fourth lines rhyme, e.g.:

AUTUMN
Falling leaves
mould, rain
damp, mist
blocked drain.

The first three lines can be phrases or words separated by commas.

These forms should never be used prescriptively but should be suggested for those who find it difficult to develop their own forms.[4] Some children may wish to expand the forms suggested, i.e. to write more lines or more words to a line than suggested. Their efforts should be accepted and discussed with the major focus on the words they have chosen and how they have sequenced them. Forms 1 - 3 above will help the children to get away from their often restrictive ideas about poetry i.e. that a poem has got to rhyme. Where children want to use rhyme they should be encouraged to do so, but the principle focus should be upon meaning and vivid words to convey the meaning rather than rhyme at the expense of meaning.

Recalled experience

Besides using direct sensory experiences as described above, children, particularly the older ones, can be encouraged to recall their own personal experiences associated with a theme expressed in poems they have heard or read (possibly a poem or group of poems chosen by the teacher). For example, the teacher might have introduced a group of poems about roads and travelling.

'Roads Go on Forever' by J. R. R. Tolkien
'Maps' by Dorothy Brown Thompson
'Moving' by Eunice Tietjens

in Arbuthnot, May Hill *ed.*
Time for Poetry.
Scott, Foresman & Co., 1959. pp. 182, 186, 194.

Having considered the poems, discussed the theme and possibly spoken some of the poems themselves, some students might write about their own feelings in connection with roads or travelling. However, this approach has pitfalls unless handled flexibly and sensitively by the teacher. It should not be construed as an encouragement to write pale imitations of the poems introduced to the students.

Other ways of helping students or younger children to recall personal experiences might be through discussion, listening to an evocative piece of music, a story or by looking at a painting, photograph or other piece of visual art. Excursions, listening to sounds in the environment or listening to the teacher evoke a scene through skilful use of vivid language may all be used to unlock memories of children's own experiences, as well as using objects as described on page 10.

The teacher's role in these activities is:

- to **focus** the children's attention on an object or activity (although it may have been brought, suggested or selected originally by one of the children)
- to encourage them to **explore** with the senses, and to contribute words and phrases to describe the object or experience, their feelings and emotions, and a setting or context

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[4] Other suggestions for useful forms for writing can be found in:
Powell, Brian *Making Poetry:* approaches to writing from classrooms round the world. Collier Macmillan, 1973.

- to encourage them to **select** words and phrases they think most vivid and expressive
- to help them to **sequence** the words in order to find a satisfying form
- to extend their experience of language and poetry by reading poems relevant to their own interests and efforts (as shown on page 13 that is, **after** the children had made their own poems about the pine-cones).

Choosing poetry

There are many ways in which poems can be introduced to children, but the most obvious way is by reading poems to and with children. Hearing poetry and stories read aloud is an essential part of each child's school day; therefore the teacher is at a great advantage if he or she enjoys literature and the fun of sharing it with others. It is important that children are intoduced to a wide variety of poems, remembering that they will want favourites over and over again, and will often enjoy saying them with the teacher. When choosing poems we need to be sensitive to the ring of truth and vivid expressive language in a good poem. Children are quick to recognise insincerity and pretentiousness. The poetry we read to children should not be treated so as to appear a special or rarified form of expression, spoken in hallowed or mournful tones – *'because it's poetry'*; it should be introduced with stories and other forms of literature, so that it is seen to be part of the whole body of literature. Therefore although poetry presents us with unique insights and understandings, it should be presented quite naturally as being part of our rich literary heritage.

Poetry presented to children should include:

- nursery rhymes and folk rhymes
- poems and rhymes with strong rhythms and repetition
- cumulative rhymes and stories e.g. 'The House that Jack Built'
- poems and songs with refrains and choruses
- carols and psalms
- ballads and story poems, including bush ballads
- simple lyrics and vivid descriptive poetry
- humorous and nonsense verse

NOTE: The poems chosen should include both metrical and free verse, rhymed and unrhymed forms.

Some poems might be chosen for their appealing rhythmic quality and sound, some for their humour or story, others for the vividness and truth of the experience they describe. The choice of what to read aloud should be made with consideration of the nature and interests of the children, their intellectual and emotional development and their attitude to poetry, based on previous experience of poetry. If for example, a group of ten to twelve-year-olds say they don't like poetry, try some of the bush ballads such as 'How McDougall Topped the Score' by Thomas E. Spencer, 'A Bush Christening' by A. B. Paterson (*in* Flynn, M. M. and Groom J. *eds. This Land:* an anthology of Australian poetry for young people. Pergamon Press, 1968) or some of Spike Milligan's nonsense or humorous verse (e.g. *Silly Verse for Kids.* Puffin Books, 1968).

It is important when choosing poems:

- to choose a wide variety of types of poems – i.e. not stick only to bush ballads, humorous poems or story-poems, etc.
- to choose poems that are vivid and sharply visualised and avoid poems that are coy, artificial and speak down to the children
- to be familiar with the poem, understand its background, references, mood etc. and be able to read it aloud with sincerity and clarity.

Poetry for its own sake – and as a stimulus for other activities

A poem can and should be enjoyed for its own sake; we do not always have to 'do something' with it.

Some poems may have a deeply personal or purely lyrical quality which may be lost by any insistence on expressing the ideas through another medium. The intrinsic nature of any piece of writing, determines the method to be used when dealing with it. Sometimes even discussion or questioning is likely to spoil the private and individual images children may develop in response to a poem; drawing or improvisation may attempt to externalise an emotion, image or idea which is better left to grow in the imagination. Discussion and other activities certainly have their place in poetry appreciation but they should be used with discretion and sensitivity not simply as a matter of course.

Sometimes we want to think about the poem unhindered by talk, we want to leave it to do its work in our minds. We may want to talk about it at some later time – or not at all.

Sometimes we can talk about the poem:

– *What words did you enjoy?*

– *Did you notice any different or interesting ways the poet used words?*

– *Why does the poem make you feel happy, sad, peaceful, etc.?*

– Does the poem remind you of something you have noticed – or something that happened to you?

Sometimes we can suggest that the children respond in a variety of ways to the poem – e.g.

- some may choose to draw or paint their response
- some may prefer to make a sound or movement sequence inspired by the poem
- some may write their own poem – a poem which may or may not have any discernible connection with the poem read aloud
- some may want to speak the poem with a small group.

Introducing a poem

(The poems referred to in this and subsequent sections are followed by a Collections number e.g. C.3 which refers to a specific collection of verse or poetry in which that poem can be found. The Collections list appears on page 30.)

Remembering that young children's reactions are essentially physical, teachers will find that young children need little encouragement to join in speaking a rhyme, poem or story that they have heard several times and enjoy. This can be encouraged in a relaxed and informal way with the children:

- joining in repetitive lines or a chorus e.g. the chorus line *Hee, haw, hum!* in 'John Cook's Mare' or the chorus in 'A frog he would a-wooing go'. (C.8)
- joining in a cumulative story or verse such as 'The house that Jack built' or the folk tale of 'The pig who wouldn't jump over the stile'.

Later the children enjoy taking one part of a poem e.g. the direct speech with the teacher taking the narrative part or one part of a question–answer type verse e.g. the mouse-voices in 'Three Little Mice'. (C.8)

Three little mice sat down to spin
Pussy passed by and she peeped in.

Teacher: *'What are you at, my fine little men?'*
Children: *'Making coats for gentlemen.'*
Teacher: *'Shall I come in and cut off your threads?'*
Children: *'Oh no, Mistress Pussy, you'll bite off our heads!'*

- moving to rhythm rhymes, including those they themselves have made – feeling the strong pulse of the verse.

Older children usually enjoy speaking a variety of poems which they have previously heard and enjoyed. They can be encouraged to add sound patterns or movement to poems where these effects enhance, but do not detract from the form or meaning of the poems chosen.

A context for poetry

The way in which a poem is introduced to children is most important if they are to develop positive attitudes towards poetry and find poetry-speaking a rewarding and enjoyable activity. Points to consider are:

- creating a mood or atmosphere which will enhance the poem and make its context clearer – sometimes before the actual first reading of the poem
- developing in the children expectations of poetry as an enjoyable experience.

There are many ways of introducing poems and a successful introduction will depend on the teacher's own interest, sensitivity and sense of timing. Various teachers have used the following introductions with good effect:

1. One teacher, with a genuine love of poetry and a fairly wide background of literature, often reads or speaks a poem to the children when a particular moment, event or thought reminds her of a poem she has enjoyed. Her poems are either in her head, or on cards or anthologies near her desk. In her class children have learned to accept poetry as a natural part of life and often make their own poems. They have come to recognise poetry as an experience; a vivid, individual, perhaps even unusual way, not only of expressing something deeply felt, but of looking at the world.

2. A primary teacher often asks the children to close their eyes while she creates a brief but vivid word-picture as a background to the poem before reading it to the children. For instance, before reading Walter de la Mare's poem 'The ride-by-nights' (C.23) they may briefly discuss the night sky and she may say, *Shut your eyes and see the vast dark sky above you – the moon is only a silver sliver – the patterns of stars shine against the blackness of the night – some of the star-patterns make pictures – now listen to the poem, 'Ride-by-nights'.*

3. A secondary school social science teacher who particularly enjoys Australian poetry often introduces poems which are relevant to whatever aspect of Australian history is being studied, to help,

as he says *emphasise the human element that lies behind the dates and events of my subject.* With a background of the conditions of a particular period, the students can for instance, appreciate more fully the loneliness and hardship of the wives of the early pioneers and the pathos, as expressed in a poem such as 'The Shearer's Wife' by Louis Esson (C.7).

4. An infant teacher often introduces poems that are relevant to the experiences of the children, either during the experience or afterwards when the children are reflecting on the experience. For instance before a visit to the beach she read several times Eleanor Farjeon's poem 'There are big waves' (C.13). The children enjoyed the strong rhythm and some of the children learnt to speak the poem by listening to it and then joining in with the teacher. At the beach she noticed two children paddling and jumping up and down chanting the poem. After the excursion when the children were looking at things they had brought back, the teacher read other beach and sea poems from the same book. The children particularly enjoyed 'The Black Pebble' by James Reeves and 'Let Me Hear' by Linda Whitehead (C.13).

5. Another lower primary teacher who enjoys using movement and verbal dynamic activities with the children (see *Expressive Movement* booklet), took the children outside to play in the autumn leaves which provided a stimulus for word and movement sequences. These in turn became an excellent introduction to Eve Merriam's poem 'Autumn Leaves' (C.14) which the children quickly learned to speak with movement developed from their earlier work.

On another occasion this teacher suggested that the children use verbal dynamics in an exploration of the way in which water moves. One group filled a bucket with water and observed the movement of the water when the bucket was moved or knocked. Another small group observed the way the water moved in a partially blocked downpipe during a rain storm. As a result of their close observation, discussion and subsequent verbal dynamic sessions the children wrote short poems or word-ladders. The teacher commented on the children's absorption and concentration during this work and on their close observation of water in various circumstances. They discussed with the teacher various images for water and the sea in poems they had read or heard. One child then suggested the idea that poets look really closely at things and describe them in great detail; another child said she noticed that poets often tell us that something reminds them of something else. The teacher then asked the children to listen to Eve Merriam's poem 'Until I saw the sea' (C.13). The children thought about the three images:

- *that wind*
  could wrinkle water so.
- *that sun*
  could splinter a whole sea of blue.
- *a sea breathes in and out*
  upon a shore.

Then the teacher asked:

– *Did* you *notice something about water that you've looked at lately that you never noticed before?*

Besides observing water close at hand, the children had recently visited the beach.

Some of the children's replies indicate their thoughtful and sensitive consideration:

– *The sea looked as though it was tossing something in the air.*

– *The spray looked like it was being picked up by the wind.*

– *A wave gets tighter and tighter until it can't take it any more; it has to loosen underneath and rest.*

6. A drama teacher often introduces poetry during or after an improvisation, choosing poems which capture the emotions or situation of the drama. For instance after a drama about survivors from a shipwreck she introduced the poem 'The Survivors' by R. S. Thomas (C.26) and by doing so, the whole notion of reflecting and recalling an experience sometime later was discussed. Later in the term a number of students writing about a disaster used the reminiscing viewpoint of an elderly survivor rather than the more usual objective account.

7. Another teacher attempts to set the mood for the introduction of certain poems by using a sound-sequence introduction, or sometimes an evocative piece of music. For instance, in a sound exploration exercise one group explored consonants and vowel sounds that suggested a deserted house. The group developed a pattern of sustained sounds woven together and punctuated by a pattern of 't' sounds with intermittent 'r' sounds.

m m m   m m m
oooh   oooh   oooh
t   tt   t   tt   t   t
n n n n n   n n n n n
r r r   r r r

After experimenting with pace, pause and climax, the group made their sound pattern fairly quietly while the teacher read aloud Walter de la Mare's poem 'The Listeners' (C.19).

NOTE:

Sound accompaniments to poems – the need for restraint

When suggesting the making of sound sequences to accompany a poem, the teacher needs to be aware that not all poems are suitable for using in this way. The effectiveness of poems that are quiet, meditative or introspective might be diminished or destroyed by any additional effects. Sound sequences are often most effective as an accompaniment to word patterns the children have made up themselves. Also they are often effective in accompanying robust, direct narrative or dramatic poems, and poems with a strong suggestion of mood or atmosphere. Humour in poems can often be enhanced by sound effects and children enjoy finding funny sounds to highlight the fun. This work needs sensitive and subtle handling; the teacher and the students should ask themselves – *Do these additional effects add to or clarify the meaning of the poem – or are they distracting?*

Group speaking

The following points should be considered in order to make group speaking an enjoyable activity:

It is essential that the teacher should understand thoroughly the meaning and form of the poems chosen for reading to the children and for speaking by the children.

1. When placing a selection of poems before children for group speaking, the teacher needs to bear in mind that not all poems are suitable for group work. For instance, poems that are intensely personal or introspective are best spoken by an individual, not a group. Poems that use the first person (not including direct speech in narrative or dramatic poems) are often unsuitable for group work for the same reason. Poems with definite contrasts, strong story lines, repetition and refrains are often suitable for group speaking.

2. Groups for speaking should be of a size which enables each child to hear the others in the group; ideally 8 - 12 children. Long passages of unison work undertaken by large groups often result in dull, monotonous repetition with little illumination of meaning.

3. When dividing a poem between the group members, the form should be kept intact, and a single thought or sense unit should not be broken or divided. For instance, it is unwise to chop up lines to allow one person or group to speak 'said etc.'. In a lyric such as 'The Listeners' by Walter de la Mare (C.19) chopping up the poem in this way not only spoils the rhythm and sense of the poem but it becomes almost impossible to create the right mood of mystery and wonder – e.g.

1st child: *Is there anybody there?*
Group: *said the traveller*
Knocking on the moonlit door,

and later

1st child: *Tell them I came and no one answered,*
That I kept my word!
Group: *he said.*

There are however many poems that can be used with a variety of solo parts and groups, e.g. 'Cats' by Eleanor Farjeon (C.15) in which various children can speak the lines about where cats are found. However the divisions are made not mechanically line by line, but phrase by phrase.

CATS
Group: *Cats sleep*
Anywhere,
Solo voice: *Any table*
Solo voice: *Any chair, etc.*
. . .
. . .
. . .
. . .
Solo voice: *Anybody's*
Lap will do,
Solo voice: *Fitted in a*
Cardboard box,
Solo voice: *In the cupboard*
With your frocks –
Group: *Anywhere!*
They don't care!
Cats sleep
Anywhere.

Often poems that basically are lists or catalogues lend themselves to being spoken by a series of solo voices. Other examples might be 'Winter days' by Gareth Owen (C.14) provided the lines are not divided up in such a way as to destroy the sense; 'Hard cheese' by Justin St John (C.16) is another good poem for upper primary children to speak with some unison and a number of solo passages. This poem lends itself too, to movement and some characterisation (the four grown-ups in particular).

The selection and arrangement of poems for group speaking, whether for solo voices, two-part group work, cumulative group work or unison work can be a time of experimentation and exploration for both the teacher and the children.

4. When a group begins to speak a poem they will need the teacher's help and guidance in understanding and using emphasis and pause, and in developing their natural speech rhythms and inflections while maintaining the form of the poem. However, giving help and guidance does not mean giving a guiding beat or directing every intonation, nuance of emphasis and inflection. Where the teacher and the children work together to capture the essence of the poem, to let the poem move them and speak through them, emphasis and inflection will fall into place naturally. These aspects and what is often called 'expression' should not be imposed on the children; dictating how the poem is to be spoken will only result in artificial mechanical speaking which may antagonise the children and turn them off poetry for good. Once the children are familiar with a poem they should be able to speak it without the teacher's help.

5. When speaking the poem together a balance must be maintained between the meaning and the rhythmic pattern. The stronger and more regular the pattern, the easier it is to develop a sing-song monotonous delivery. This is particularly true of many of the Australian bush ballads and regular metrical poems such as 'Hiawatha' by H. W. Longfellow.

6. The grouping – or visual effect of the speakers is important and very few poems are enhanced by the children being made to stand in straight lines as a formal choir. Often the poem itself will suggest interesting grouping effects such as using different levels (rostra blocks are useful) and positions. The poem 'Cats' by Eleanor Farjeon quoted earlier needs a relaxed informal grouping with the children close together but in a variety of positions and using a variety of levels to emphasise the idea of being anywhere i.e. suggesting a variety of places by the voices coming from a variety of levels and directions.

7. When movement or a sound sequence is used to accompany a poem, the teacher and children should discuss whether the poem gains anything from these additions or not. Lyrical poems and those that involve intense emotion or the creating of sensitive feeling or atmosphere are often hindered rather than helped by additional effects. Without the additional effects children are able to give their full attention to the words, their meaning, sound and rhythm. However, poems with a strong suggestion of movement e.g. 'Ants' by Barrie Grayson (C.15) or of sound e.g. 'The Ceremonial Band' by James Reeves (C.5) often gain in mood and effectiveness by movement and sound when it is sensitively used and grows out of an understanding of and feeling for the poem. Each group of children,

working together with their teacher, need to come up with their own unique (for them) interpretation. Both the teacher and the children can make suggestions as they interpret the poem together. The teacher's role is to help the children to make discoveries and to give suggestions rather than instructions. Having worked with a group that has come to a fresh and effective interpretation, the teacher should resist the temptation to impose that particular interpretation on another group of children.

8. When introducing group speaking it is usually a good idea to read a variety of poems to the children from which they choose those they would like to speak with the teacher's guidance. Once the children have had experience of speaking a variety of poems with the teacher's help, older children are able to work together in small groups to choose a poem, discuss how they will speak it and then work together to speak it aloud to another group. However, working this way is usually unproductive if the children have had little or no experience in poetry speaking.

Younger children will need the teacher's help for a longer period, but they too will be able to speak work without the teacher's help.

9. When working on group speaking, it is often wisest to work on several poems rather than to repeat one poem over and over again. Working on one poem two or three times and then moving on to another poem will usually hold the children's attention and keep their poetry experience enjoyable.

Solo speaking

As well as speaking poems together in groups, some children will respond well to opportunities to speak a poem alone either to a small group of their peers or to the rest of the class. When children have heard a wide variety of poems read aloud by the teacher, through group speaking and from tapes and records, including poems they have found, they can be encouraged to speak or read aloud those poems they particularly enjoy. They should be encouraged to bring and read poems from many different sources. The teacher's attitude and acceptance of poems or verse which he or she may not consider very highly, is a crucial factor in helping students to become more interested in poetry and to develop their own preferences in poetry. This may mean serious consideration of 'pop' writers of many kinds with the tactful introduction of other poems on similar themes, to help broaden students awareness of poetry. Many young adolescents respond to the challenge to write about their own feelings and these poetic expressions can often be included in the poetry and verse they speak or read aloud to others.

Poetry collections

The children can be encouraged to keep a personal file of poems they like. Also, some teachers have developed classroom poetry collections by asking each student to contribute one or two poems he or she likes best. This idea has been most successful in a number of secondary classes and has resulted in several most interesting poetry collections with particular appeal to young adolescents.

As well as poetry collections in the library, attractively illustrated books of poetry and verse should be available to the children in the classroom. However, poetry is an aural mode, and having books of poetry available in the classroom is not sufficient; poems need human voices to bring them to life.

> *Poetry must first be listened to. Its main life is always its spoken life.* [5]

It is impossible to over emphasise the importance of introducing a wide variety of poems to children of all ages and therefore of the necessity for the teacher to be constantly on the look-out for vivid and moving poetry which has the ring of truth about it. Lillian Smith in *The unrelucant years* writes:

> *In giving poetry to children it is well to remember that they understand far more than they can express. Children apprehend by intuition and imagination that which is far beyond their limited experience. In their reading of true poetry, they are not only laying up a store of purest English, they are also finding an expression for thoughts and feelings of which they are but dimly aware. If our aim is to extend the number of children who turn to poetry expecting delight, it seems only natural that we must put within their reach the poetry whose power to delight is most present and most memorable.* [6]

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[5] Peel, Marie. *Seeing to the heart;* English and Imagination in the Junior School. Chatto and Windus, 1967.

[6] Smith, Lillian. *The unrelucant years;* a critical approach to children's literature. A.L.A., 1953, p. 113.

Suggested poems for group speaking

Various teachers have contributed the following titles of poetry, verse and some prose extracts which children have taken to enthusiastically and have enjoyed speaking in groups.

Infant teachers:
- *Puddles* by J. Stickells (C. 20)
- *Bonfire Night* by R. Brighton (C. 20)
- *Jonathan Bing* by B. C. Brown (C. 23)
- *There are Big Waves* by Eleanor Farjeon (C. 13)
- *Cat* by M. B. Miller (C. 15)
- *A Snail* by John Drinkwater (C. 15)
- *Autumn Leaves* by Eve Merriam (C. 14)
- *There was an Old Woman* (C. 8)
- *What's in There?* (C. 8)
- *The Frog and the Mouse* (C. 8)
- *Twice Times* by A. A. Milne (C. 9)
- *The Story of Ferdinand* by Munro Leaf (extracts). Hamish Hamilton, 1939
- *The Owl and the Pussycat* by Edward Lear (C. 23)

Lower primary teachers:
- *A – Apple Pie* by Walter de la Mare (C. 19)
- *The A B C* by Spike Milligan (C. 1)
- *The Song of the Jellicles* by T. S. Eliot (C. 10)
- *Bad Sir Brian Botany* by A. A. Milne (C. 24)
- *Buckingham Palace* by A. A. Milne (C. 24)
- *Jim Jay* by Walter de la Mare (C. 19)
- *Hist!* by C. J. Dennis (C. 5)
- *Platypus and Kookaburra* by Rex Ingamells (C. 2)
- *Tune for Swans* by James McAuley (C. 7)
- *Native Companions Dancing* by John Shaw Neilson (C. 7)
- *Danny the Champion of the World* by Roald Dahl (an extract – the pheasant incident). Puffin Books, 1969
- *Aeroplane* by Mary McB. Green (C. 23)
- *School's Out!* by Hal Summers (C. 3)

Upper primary teachers:
- *Hard Cheese!* by Justin St John (C. 16)
- *The Jumblies* by Edward Lear (C. 17)
- *The Chant of the Awakening Bulldozers* by Patricia Hubbell (C. 6)
- *House Moving* by Patricia Hubbell (C. 6)
- *School's Out!* by Hal Summers (C. 3)
- *Bus to School* by John Walsh (C. 25)
- *Wonka's Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl (from 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory') (C. 1)
- *Ants* by Barrie Grayson (C. 15)
- *The 'Waterwitch'* (C. 22)
- *Long Ago* by Rex Ingamells (C. 7)
- *A Song of Rain* by C. J.Dennis (extracts) C. 7)
- *The Quangle Wangle's Hat* by Edward Lear. Puffin Books, 1969
- *The Listeners* by Walter de la Mare (C. 19)
- *The Abandoned House* by Patricia Hubbell (C. 21)
- *The Deserted House* by Mary Coleridge (C. 21)

Lower secondary teachers:
- *Spurn Light* by John Redwood Anderson (C. 4)
- *Brand the Blacksmith* by James Reeves (C. 4)
- *The Icefall* by Jan Serraillier (C. 18)
- *India* by W. J. Turner (C. 11)
- *Tyger, Tyger* by William Blake (C. 11)
- *Winter the Huntsman* by Osbert Sitwell (C. 5)
- *The Ceremonial Band* by James Reeves (C. 5)
- *The Pobble* by Edward Lear (C. 17)
- *Jabberwocky* by Lewis Carroll (C. 23)
- *Dolphins in Blue Water* by Amy Lowell (C. 25)
- *The Tomcat* by Don Marquis (C. 12)
- *Target Area* by Peter Roberts (C. 12)
- *Central Park Tourney* by Mildred Weston (C. 21)
- *Southbound on the Freeway* by May Swenson (C. 21)

POETRY REFERENCES

POETRY COLLECTIONS – REFERENCES

Collections referred to in the section on group verse speaking:

C. 1	Maybury, Barry *ed.*	*Bandwagon*	O.U.P., 1974.
C. 2	Saxby, Joyce	*Chosen for Children.*	Angus and Robertson, 1968.
C. 3	Wollman, M. and Grugeon, D. *eds.*	*Happenings.*	Harrap, 1972.
C. 4	Wollman, M. and Hurst, D.M. *eds.*	*Harrap's Junior Book of Modern Verse.*	Harrap, 1961.
C. 5	Russell, N. and Chatfield, H.J. *eds.*	*Junior Poetry Workshop.*	Nelson, 1968.
C. 6	Summerfield, G. *ed.*	*Junior Voices;* the first book.	Penguin Books, 1970.
C. 7	Fowler, M. M. *ed.*	*Land of the Rainbow Gold;* poetry for young Australians.	Nelson, 1967.
C. 8	Reeves, James *ed.*	*The Merry-go-round.*	Penguin Books, 1967.
C. 9	Milne, A. A.	*Now We Are Six.*	Methuen, 1955.
C.10	Eliot, T.S.	*Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats.*	Faber, 1948.
C.11	Blishen, E. and Wildsmith, B. *eds.*	*Oxford Book of Poetry for Children.*	O.U.P., 1963.
C.12	Russell, N. and Chatfield, H. J. *eds.*	*Poetry Workshop.*	Nelson, 1967.
C.13	Speech and Drama Centre *ed.*	*Poetry 1: The Sea*	Tasmania Media Centre, 1974.
C.14		*Seasons*	
C.15		*Animals*	
C.16		*Me and My Friends.*	
C.17	Graham, E. *ed.*	*A Puffin Book of Verse.*	Penguin Books, 1959.
C.18	Graham, E. *ed.*	*A Puffin Quartet of Poets.*	Penguin Books, 1958.
C.19	de la Mare, Walter	*Secret Laughter.*	Penguin Books, 1969.
C.20	Woodland, E. J. M. *ed.*	*Skipping Susan.*	Evans, 1966.
C.21	Allinson, B. and A. *eds.*	*Space Poems.*	Nelson, 1975.
C.22	Flynn, M. M. and Groom, J. *eds.*	*This Land;* an anthology of Australian poetry for young people.	Pergamon Press, 1968.
C.23	Arbuthnot, M. H. *ed.*	*Time for Poetry.*	Scott, Foresman, 1959.
C.24	Milne, A. A.	*When We Were Very Young.*	Methuen, 1955.
C.25	Maybury, Barry *ed.*	*Wordscapes.*	O.U.P., 1970.
C.26	Wollman, M. and Spencer, J. *eds.*	*Modern Poems for the Commonwealth.*	Harrap, 1966.

Poetry References

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Berg, Leila	*Reading and Loving*	Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977.
Druce, Robert	*The Eye of Innocence;* children and their poetry.	University of London Press, 1965.
Hourd, M. L. and Cooper, G. E.	*Coming Into Their Own;* a study of the idiom of young children revealed in their verse-writing.	Heinemann, 1971.
Marshall, Sybil	*An Experiment in Education.*	Cambridge University Press, 1975.
Peel, Marie	*Seeing to the Heart;* English and imagination in the junior school (particularly the chapter on poetry).	Chatto & Windus, 1967.
Reeves, James	*Teaching Poetry.*	Heinemann, 1963.
Sansom, Clive	*Speech and Communication in the Primary School.*	A. & C. Black, 1972.
Smith, Lillian	*The Unreluctant Years;* a critical approach to children's literature.	A.L.A., 1953.

ANTHOLOGIES OF POETRY AND VERSE FOR:

- **reading aloud**
- **group speaking**
- **solo speaking**

*Allinson, A. and B. *eds.*	*Multi-poems.*	Nelson, 1972.
*Allinson, A. and B. *eds.*	*Poems for Magic Seasons.*	Nelson, 1974.
*Allinson, A. and B. *eds.*	*Space Poems.*	Nelson, 1974.
Armstrong, I. and Mansfield, R. *eds.*	*A Sudden Line;* an anthology of modern verse.	O.U.P., 1976.
*Arbuthnot, M. H. *ed.*	*Time for Poetry.*	Scott, Foresman & Co., 1959.
*Blakeley, Peggy *ed.*	*Bric-a-brac;* poems for young readers.	A. & C. Black, 1973.
*Blishen, Edward *ed.*	*Oxford Book of Poetry for Children.*	Oxford University Press, 1963.
Boomer, Garth and McFarlane, P. *eds.*	*Orange Moon.*	Rigby, 1975.

**Collections for children in the infant and primary school.*

Anthologies, continued

*Briggs, Raymond *illus.*	*The Mother Goose Treasury.*	Puffin Books, 1972.
Causley, Charles	*Underneath the Water.*	Macmillan 1968.
Fowler, M. M. *ed.*	*Land of the Rainbow Gold;* poetry for young Australians.	Nelson, .7.
Groundwater-Smith, S. *ed.*	*Over My Shoulder.*	Rigby, 1978.
Jones, Rhodri *ed.*	*Preludes;* Families.	Heinemann Education Books, 1971.
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	Work and Play.	Heinemann Education Books, 1971.
Mansfield, R. and Armstrong, I. *eds.*	*Every Man Will Shout;* an anthology of modern verse.	O.U.P., 1964.
Maybury, Barry *ed.*	*Wordscapes;* an anthology of poetry and pictures.	O.U.P., 1970.
Maybury, Barry *ed.*	*Thoughtshapes.*	O.U.P., 1970.
Maybury, Barry *ed.*	*Bandstand.*	O.U.P., 1970.
Maybury, Barry *ed.*	*Bandwaggon.*	O.U.P., 1970.
*Reeves, James *ed.*	*The Merry-go-round;* a collection of rhymes and poems for children.	Penguin Books, 1967.
Milligan, Spike	*A Book of Milliganimals.*	Puffin Books, 1968.
Milligan, Spike	*Silly Verse for Kids.*	Puffin Books, 1968.
*Sansom, Clive	*Speech Rhymes.*	A. & C. Black, 1974.
*Sansom, Clive	*Counting Rhymes.*	A. & C. Black, 1974.
*Sansom, Clive	*Acting Rhymes.*	A. & C. Black, 1975.
*Sansom, Ruth	*Rhythm Rhymes.*	A. & C. Black, 1964.
*Speech and Drama Centre, Hobart, *ed.*	*Poetry 1:* a thematic approach 6 booklets and tapes, – *Me.* – *Me and My Family.* – *Me and My Friends.* – *The Seasons.* – *The Sea.* – *Animals.*	Tasmania Media Centre, 1974. (Available from: the Media Centre, Hobart.)
Summerfield, G. *ed.*	*Junior Voices Books I – IV:* anthologies of poetry and pictures.	Penguin Education, 1970.
Thompson, Brian *ed.*	*Once Around the Sun;* an anthology of poetry by Australian children.	Oxford University Press, 1966.

**Collections for children in the infant and primary school.*

Anthologies, continued

Williams, Eric *ed.*	*Dragonsteeth.*	Edward Arnold, 1972.
Williams, Eric *ed.*	*Looking Glass;* an anthology of contemporary poetry.	Edward Arnold, 1973.
Williams, Eric *ed.*	*Tapestry.*	Edward Arnold, 1974.
Williams, Eric *ed.*	*Telescope.*	Edward Arnold, 1974.
Wollman, M. and Grugeon, D. *eds.*	*Happenings;* new poems for schools.	Harrap, 1964.
Wollman, M. and Austin, A. *eds.*	*Happenings 2;* new poems for schools.	Harrap, 1972.
*Woodland, E. J. M. *ed.*	*Skipping Susan.*	Evans, 1966.

**Collections for children in the infant and primary school.*

POETRY RECORDINGS

	Popular Verse of Early Australia; read by Peter O'Shaughnessy. Two LP records with an excellently read selection of Australian verse from the bush ballad era to more recent work.	World Record Club, S/5069 and 5070.

NOTE: A limited selection of poetry lists, etc. are available on request from:

The Speech and Drama Centre
73 Brisbane Street, Hobart 7000.

SOME USEFUL BOOKS FROM WHICH SOUND-MAKING ACTIVITIES COULD BE DEVELOPED

- **For younger children:**

Hutchins, Pat	*Clocks and More Clocks.*	Picture Puffin, 1974.
Yashima, Taro	*Crow Boy.*	Picture Puffin, 1976.
Bonner, Ann and Roger	*Earlybirds, Earlywords.*	Picture Puffin, 1973.
Coudville, Jonathon	*Farmer Fisher.*	Picture Puffin, 1978.
Ets, Marie Hall	*Gilberto and the Wind.*	Picture Puffin, 1978.
Hutchins, Pat	*Good-night, Owl!*	Picture Puffin, 1975.
McPhail, David M.	*The Glerp.*	Cheshire Cat Book, 1974.
Lock, Sue	*Hubert Hunts His Hum.*	Picture Puffin, 1970.

Some useful books from which sound-making activities could be developed – for younger children, continued

Blake, Quentin	*Patrick.*	Picture Puffin, 1970.
Yashima, Taro	*Umbrella.*	Picture Puffin, 1977.
Garelick, M.	*Where Does the Butterfly Go When it Rains?*	Scholastic Book Services, 1975.
Sendak, Maurice	*Where the Wild Things Are.*	Picture Puffin, 1970.

- For older children:

Figes, E.	*The Musicians of Bremen.*	Grasshopper Book, 1974. (Abelard-Schuman)
McDermott, Gerald	*The Stone Cutter.*	Picture Puffin, 1978.
McDermott, Gerald	*Arrow to the Sun.*	Picture Puffin, 1977.
	The Legend of Yondi and the Boomerang.	Available from: The Speech and Drama Centre, Hobart.

There is a limited selection of stories for sound-making, drama and movement available on request from The Speech and Drama Centre, 73 Brisbane Street, Hobart 7000.

TEACHERS NOTES

a framework for speech and drama

DRAMA

an introduction to speech and drama from kindergarten to lower secondary

The five supplementary booklets are entitled:

- An Introduction and Overview
- Expressive Movement
- Talking and Listening. Storybuilding and telling
- Sound, Words and Poetry
- Puppetry and Constructions

Department of Education and The Arts Tasmania

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SECTION 1
THE PROCESS OF DRAMA

What is drama?

Drama in school is concerned with children's capacity to put themselves imaginatively into someone else's situation and to express ideas and feelings in interactions with other people in a variety of agreed upon situations. It is an active involvement and identification with fictitious situations and characters.

Dorothy Heathcote puts it succinctly when she says:

> [Drama is to do with] *all those ways we have of finding out where a person really stands, and how we form opinions of people. We depict* [in drama] *what we think people and things are like, and we make sense of the world by these depictions of it.* [1]

Drama is a powerful medium through which children can learn to cope with life situations within a safe framework of 'pretend', knowing that the events and emotions are simulated, yet having the freedom to act and react as if they were real. Drama is 'expression in action', involving the child's whole being, and ranges from the imaginative self-directed play of kindergarten children to the consciously planned and structured play-making activities of grade 10-12 students.

The development of drama in the school program is concerned with:

- the growth of personality
- the growth of sensitivity and consideration towards others
- the growth of commitment to the group and to the task or enterprise undertaken by the group
- the growth of spontaneity and resourcefulness
- the growth and flexible use of language
- the ability to monitor actions and to see the consequences and implications of decisions taken
- the development of responsibility for decisions taken within agreed upon situations
- understanding and learning to use the elements of dramatic form e.g. tension, climax, resolution and pace.

Drama – a process not a product

Drama, then, is a developmental process rather than a product. Through drama children can discover something of the variety and nature of human behaviour. Drama also provides opportunities to reflect upon their own and other's behaviour. With continuous experience in the process of drama, children at upper primary and lower secondary level, develop the ability to communicate ideas to others; in other words they learn to use and appreciate drama as an art form. At the upper secondary level their skills and interest may extend to the formal drama of theatre where greater emphasis may be given to the finished product. However, even at this level, experience in improvised spontaneous drama is necessary to enable students to bring greater depth of meaning to texts and scripts. Improvisations can also be used as raw material from which original scripts can be developed. Even though more emphasis is placed on a finished product at the upper secondary and college levels than at primary and lower secondary levels, the 'process of drama' is still the focus of the drama course, which is not designed as, or intended to be, an acting or theatre apprenticeship; it is essentially 'practice for living'.[2]

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[1] Heathcote, Dorothy *The Enabling Teacher* – an interview with Radio New Zealand in 1978

The developmental stages in drama

It is possible to identify three main stages of development[3] that children undergo in drama and the other arts.

- Firstly, the child as 'doer' making meaning through drama and the other arts by and for himself, and later with others. His sense of audience is introspective, that is, he appears to watch himself and others from **within** the drama. One of the teachers who has contributed to this booklet refers to this as the 'scribble stage'.
- Then the child as 'planner' – planning **within the drama** to negotiate particular meanings with his fellow participants. His sense of audience is still largely introspective.
- Later the child as 'communicator' – planning to communicate meanings to others **outside** the drama. This awareness of the needs of an audience, that is, the need to make meaning explicit usually occurs towards the end of primary school or in lower secondary classes.

Theatre skills

Some students in higher secondary classes learn to cope with the more sophisticated skills of theatre, and to be able to hold in mind both the meaning they are transacting with fellow actors and an awareness of the skills and form they are using to communicate that meaning.

What drama does for children

Drama is a powerful learning medium when it is used in such a way as:
- to extend children's thinking beyond what they already know
- to clarify or bring to the surface what they already know
- to record, sort out or order what they have learned.

However when drama is merely the acting out or repetition of pre-determined actions or events performed with little insight or thought, then many of the claims made for drama are questionable.

[2] Way, Brian *Development Through Drama*, Longman, 1967 p. 1-9

[3] Courtney, Richard Seminar on curriculum planning INSEA Conference, Adelaide 1978

Used with insight and understanding of the purposes that lie behind the activities and techniques, drama can provide opportunities for:

(i) *Personal and social development*, e.g.

- learning to handle a variety of situations, relationships and their own emotions
- learning to work constructively with others
- being able to recognise other's points of view as being different from their own.

(ii) *Imaginative and cognitive development*, e.g.

- being able to enter imaginatively into the minds and lives of others
- learning to face issues, grasp implications, predict consequences, identify problems and suggest solutions.

(iii) *Language development*, e.g.

- learning to express ideas and feelings through language and physical action
- using language in many different contexts and for a variety of purposes
- reflecting on ideas, events and opinions after the drama itself is over, and being able to discuss a point of view with others
- providing the impetus for writing letters, journals, diaries, newspapers, petitions etc. as part of the development of a drama
- giving direction and impetus to reading, research and observation relating to the drama.

(iv) *Learning in other areas of the curriculum*

- extending the children's knowledge and thinking by presenting them with a new perspective on material dealt with in other subject areas e.g. social science, literature, science etc. and by putting the human element back into the events
- arousing their curiosity sufficiently to stimulate a genuine desire to want to know and find out more about a topic.

(v) *Using and appreciating structure and form*

- being able to select, re-shape and sequence sections of their drama experiences and to use aspects of dramatic form, such as climax, pace, conflict and tension, resolution
- being able to communicate ideas to an audience by means of dramatic form (this aspect will be elaborated upon in a later section).

Personal and social development

(i) *The interaction between the child and the role*

- The interaction between the child and the role he adopts is most complex and it is constantly being readjusted. Also, the distinction he makes between the two is likely to be blurred and indefinite.

At first the child's development with his role may be 'external', in that it is little more than compliance with easily recognised occupational actions, but as the drama progresses and his knowledge about the context grows he tends to become more absorbed in his assumed role and the context within which he is reacting. At some moments during the drama a child may be totally absorbed so that he appears to be 'living' his part completely: the next moment he may still be 'in' the drama, yet detached and looking on. His engagement with the drama will probably fluctuate between these two extremes and at times he may come out of role altogether, then later return to it again. As he grows older he becomes more able to sustain his role consistently.

To his assumed role, the child brings much of himself, his past experiences and those derived from literature and television. Through his assumed role within the drama he makes use of those experiences he deems appropriate; he orders and re-orders these experiences to make meaning of them. At the same time, the drama provides a structure which enables him to remove or 'distance' these experiences from life as he is living it now. When he reflects upon the events and feelings he experienced while in his assumed role, he does so as himself.

Taking a role, therefore, involves being able to try out and pursue within the relatively safe and delineated situation of the drama and a chosen role, facets of his own character. For example, he is able to sample or try out what it is like to be gentle, caring, evil, aggressive, merciful or vengeful. Then, within the safety of being himself, he can reflect upon those particular aspects of his role and upon his own feelings. In this way he becomes more knowledgeable and discerning about himself and others.

(ii) *The interaction between members of the group*

Drama more than any other area of the curriculum provides many opportunities for social learning, because it is essentially a social activity conducted under non-competitive conditions, providing opportunities for learning:

- to co-operate in sharing ideas, space and materials
- to consider others; listen to and respect other people's opinions
- to accept compromise and adjust socially to others
- to take and accept leadership
- to discuss common concerns or problems and to suggest possible solutions
- to become trustworthy through being trusted
- to be responsible by being given opportunities to act responsibly; also, to take responsibility for the consequences of actions and decisions made by the group
- to make a commitment to the group enterprise
- to be able to sustain concentration and effort in carrying a group enterprise to a conclusion; to persevere in a task.

Language, imagination and cognitive development are intimately linked together. Drama activities conducted by perceptive teachers can provide many opportunities to extend and develop the children's language, imagination and understanding.

Within the problems and tasks set up in the drama, the children with the help of a sympathetically involved adult, learn to face issues and to grasp implications as the drama develops. They begin to see that the decisions they make carry with them implications and responsibilities for the development of the action and the behaviour of the people within the drama. They begin to see that choices they make affect others and can change the course of events. These insights are unlikely to occur by chance; the enabling teacher sets up procedures, uses techniques and makes opportunities for reflection in order to create or take advantage of those moments of insight.

Solving problems, making decisions and seeing implications involves a wide variety of language uses for which drama provides the context. Seven of these language uses which are essential for cognitive development, are described in Joan Tough's work. They are opportunities to use language:

- to recall and give detail of past events
- to reason about present and recalled experiences
- to anticipate future events and predict outcomes
- to recognise and offer solutions to problems
- to plan and survey alternatives for possible courses of action
- to project into the experiences and feelings of other people
- to use the imagination to build scenes through the use of language for their play ('pretends' or drama).[4]

A perceptive teacher can elicit some or all of these language uses through the structure of the drama which is set up. However, drama in which the teacher leaves the children to work alone is unlikely to extend them beyond the language they already use. Drama experiences should demand thoughtfulness and commitment. As the children's commitment to the work grows, so their emotional engagement with the material energises their thinking and the teacher can introduce ideas, problems or questions which lead the children to reflect upon and consider further implications.

As the teacher encourages the children to grapple with problems, plan and reason within the 'as if' or 'pretend' situation, they draw constantly on past experiences, information gleaned from many sources and on extrapolations from experiences which have some similarities to the situation of the drama. Imagination, that is image-making and the perception of images, is the basis from which the intellect develops. It is with this store of images that we comprehend; we use them whenever we read, speak, look, listen and think.[5] Drama, used with insight and understanding, can stimulate children to

[4] Tough, Joan *The Development of Meaning:* a study of children's use of language. Allen & Unwin 1977. p. 169

[5] Broudy, H.S. 'Arts Education: necessary or just nice?' in *Phi Delta Kappan.* January 1979. pp. 347-350

use and extend their 'store of images' that are so essential to their cognitive and intellectual development.

The teacher's responsibility in drama

The attitude of the teacher is crucial to the success of a drama lesson. In expecting a sincere and wholehearted commitment from the children the teacher must be equally committed to the work being undertaken. The teacher's role is not that of a director or choreographer – nor is the teacher a facilitator who provides a stimulus for the drama and then sits back waiting for it to happen. The teacher's sensitive and empathetic participation is essential if the drama is to extend children beyond what they already know and if they are to gain any significant insights in the course of the lesson.

Drama lessons are NOT occasions when the teacher can leave the children to work alone without guidance of any kind and then watch and criticise whatever they have prepared to show him or her.

The teacher's responsibility in drama is:

- to have a clear educational aim for each particular drama experience that is set up for or with the children
- to make it clear to the children that drama is pretending and imagining
- to provide structures and situations which the children will clothe with their own ideas
- to give support to the children's ideas, helping them to value and elaborate their ideas
- to set limits and provide a focus to give purpose and security to the children
- to help the children to establish and 'flesh out' their roles by leading them through open questioning and discussion to a more thoughtful approach to the task
- to help the children make a sincere and wholehearted commitment through the teacher's own example and attitude
- to help them to speculate, consider alternatives, pose problems and to suggest possible solutions
- to help children to sequence their ideas in order to develop a satisfying form that will communicate their ideas clearly to others
- to lead children to reflect on what they are doing; and, after the drama is over, to reflect on what they have done
- to encourage them to articulate their understandings and discoveries
- to provide opportunities for upper primary and secondary students to use the elements of dramatic form in order to communicate their ideas to others.

Criteria for planning and appraisal

These criteria can be used when planning a drama, or as checks when appraising the learning experience.

Drama experience should help children and students to be able:

(i) *To explore ideas co-operatively through imaginative play.* This includes:
- the growth of imagination, feeling, thought and language
- learning to connect events and develop a story-line.

(ii) *To build up a drama and develop the ideas within a more deliberate plan.* This includes:
- exploring moral and social issues, values and attitudes
- building up a scene imaginatively i.e. to elaborate a locality and expand and clarify character and to use this as a basis for present and future actions
- discussing and reflecting upon what has happened before and speculating and predicting what might happen in the future within the context of the drama
- expressing and channelling emotion within the context of the drama.

(iii) *To make a group agreement about the 'pretend' of the drama and to hold to that agreement.* This involves:
- thinking flexibly and spontaneously within the context of the drama
- picking up clues and using them to extend the drama
- selecting the response that best fits the situation
- identifying problems that arise and seeking solutions – as the people in the drama
- developing the ability to listen, observe and concentrate.

(iv) *To learn to understand and to trust others.* This includes:
- co-operating and interacting with others
- being able to see another's point of view
- having the confidence to express a point of view
- developing tolerant attitudes.

(v) *To take responsibility for their own decisions and actions while considering others and their decisions.* This includes:
- developing self-discipline
- being able to accept and take leadership
- seeing the need for and accepting compromise.

(vi) *To be able to step outside the drama to consider and review what they have done.* This includes:
- reflecting upon moral issues and values
- questioning and discussing the credibility of attitudes and behaviour adopted by characters within the drama

- discussing and tracing the causes of events within the drama
- reflecting upon the drama with a view to repeating and reshaping it, so that feeling and meaning are clarified.

(vii) *To understand and use the elements of dramatic form in order to communicate meaning to others.* With experience in drama older students at secondary school level are able to use dramatic form more purposefully. This includes:

- being able to review and identify the moments of climax, tension and resolution with a view to clarifying the structure or form
- using the voice and body as expressive instruments to communicate meaning
- interpreting the ideas of others and being able to communicate them to an audience
- using a script and understanding the ideas and implications that lie behind the situations and language.

SECTION 2
BEGINNINGS

> *In the arts, everything can be the beginning of something else. There are no endings in the conventional sense; there are only stopping places.*[6]

These suggestions for ways to begin drama with various groups of children are meant to be adapted to suit the strengths and teaching style of the teacher and the needs, interests and stage of development of the children. Again, it is necessary to emphasise the fact that the children's current interests and concerns, as well as ideas the teacher may wish to introduce, are the materials which are explored through drama. The aim of each drama session will determine the structure and techniques the teacher decides to use in exploring the material chosen.

The teacher's involvement is essential in helping the children to think about their actions, decisions and statements. The teacher needs to be alert to picking up and **using ideas suggested by the children and extending them** rather than imposing or planting ideas.

Preliminaries

Drama is basically a combination of mental and physical activity, involving talking, thinking and doing, and the lesson is planned to give a balance between these activities. When beginning a session it is wise to give any instructions as clearly and concisely as possible and to avoid giving long complicated slabs of information. A brief discussion to formulate the basic agreement about the drama needs to be held, but the teacher should aim to involve the children in **doing** as well as talking soon after the session begins. Children who are given, or asked to agree to, detailed information are often too confused to be able to use the information to any effect.

Once the activity has begun various details can be elaborated **within** the drama, as part of the drama process, for example:

- **Details of scene**: i.e. the terrain or surroundings can be built up **during the drama**;
for example – we have agreed to take on roles as lost bushwalkers who have sheltered in a cave we stumbled into the previous night. We wake as daylight penetrates the cave and notice details of our surroundings. Through the teacher's questions and the children's comments, the imagined surroundings are developed.

- **Details of background and character can also be developed during the drama;**
for example – we are passengers travelling by train across the Nullabor Plain to Perth. Begin a conversation with a fellow passenger near you – find out why you are both making the journey – where you come from – what you do.

This is a clear indication for pair work. The development occurs through spontaneous questioning and conversation that occurs between the children. They do not plan an autobiography in advance, but the information is built up gradually as they find answers to questions they are asked and begin to see implications in the replies and decisions they make.

---

[6] King, Nancy *Giving Form to Feeling*. N.Y. Drama Book Specialist, 1975. p. 66

Interaction
Once the children begin to interact with one another, to move about, to carry out their work, occupations or other activities and to talk to one another, then the 'action' – or events – that give momentum or dynamic to the drama begin. This is where the teacher has to be alert in picking up the many ideas that the children will come up with during these interactions; the teacher will need to select one or some of these happenings or ideas and help the children to develop them and to see the implications for their decisions. Without the teacher's guidance the drama may become a string of superficial or sensational events. It is at this stage, when the drama is gathering momentum, that the teacher's carefully planned beginnings are left behind and the adventure begins. Now the teacher needs to think quickly, to take calculated risks and to be willing to try out ideas even at the risk of failure. Both the children and teacher will learn a lot by discussing their failures. So the advice to teachers is: DON'T BE AFRAID TO TRY OUT IDEAS AND VARIOUS METHODS OF WORKING.

A. **The Basic 'Question Framework'** – the foundation for drama

WHERE? – – to establish place or locality
WHO? – to establish role or character
WHAT? – to establish activity or work
WHEN? – to establish time or historical period
WHY? }
and HOW? } – these are fundamental to all the discussion and decision-making and are the basis of development within the drama.

Foundation for drama
There are many ways of developing ideas in drama. Drama consists of events and action anchored in time and place. The basis for any drama can be developed by asking:

Who are we? – identity
Where are we? – place or locality
What are we doing? – occupation, work or activity
When are we doing it? – historical period, year, season or time of day
Why are we here? }
Why are we doing what we are doing? } – These questions lead to development of the previous questions.

This is the foundation from which a wide variety of situations, characters and events can be developed.

Once the drama has started, the place, time and the identity of characters has been decided, interactions, problems and events can be generated or introduced to create **progressive** action.

These basic questions can be tackled in various ways, and can be used either to start a drama or to take it further at any point in its development. These questions therefore are **pivots** which give rise to a number of possibilities and can lead the drama in various directions.

Place (locality) and work (occupational action) are the two major foci which help anchor young children in drama and in their own 'pretends'. Sometimes a token piece of costume or a simple object will help them too. However, too many pieces of costume and other objects will often cause the drama to grind to a halt, or the lesson will consist of preparation for a drama which does not actually happen.

With older children and secondary students, the two main anchors are place and identity – *'Where we are and who we are.'*

Place

Place, then, is possibly the most basic ingredient of class drama. *'Where we are'* may be decided upon by the children and teacher as a result of a particular interest in the classroom and the teacher's intention that certain meanings should be explored and certain skills be developed. These are a few possible interests which might occur in a classroom and which can be developed by asking *'Where are we?'*:

1. *An event or activity in or near the school* – e.g. building extensions:
   the 'place' for the drama might be a building site (see page 33).
2. *The social science program* – e.g. early Australian settlers:
   the 'place' for the drama might be Risdon Cove, or an early settlement (exact location decided upon or left unspecified).
3. *A film or television program* – e.g. a 'space' adventure or exploration:
   the 'place' for the drama might be a space ship or an unknown planet.
4. *A photograph, painting or illustration* – e.g. a jungle swamp
   which becomes the 'place' for the drama.
5. *A story* (told, read or made up by the children) – e.g. the folk tale 'The elves and the shoemaker':
   the 'place' for the drama might be the shoemaker's shop or the place where the elves live.
6. *An object* – e.g. an old iron pot:
   asking the questions: *'Where might this have been used?'* or *'Where might it have been found?'*, the 'place' for the drama might be an old wreck, a ruined house, a forge etc. (see also notes on using objects or props in Drama Games, page 23).

7. *An excursion* – e.g. to Molesworth (a hop-growing valley in southern Tasmania): the 'place' for the drama might be in the hop-fields, the farmhouse, the pickers' huts, the hop-kiln or the cave on the hillside.

Time

Time is added to give a definite focus to any suggestion of place. The time (period, season, time of day) may be strongly implied in the choice of place e.g. the early settlers at Risdon Cove; in other chosen places the possibilities may be numerous e.g. the forge – 'legendary' time, Viking, Saxon, nineteenth century Australian, etc.

When deciding to use certain places, the period may be vague or 'story-book' time, but the season or time of day may be important e.g. in 'The Elves and the Shoemaker', night-time in the shoemaker's shop.

Time can sometimes be decided before *place* e.g.	• *Will our drama be about people who live now? – lived long ago? – how long ago?*
Time may be identified as being:	• *'The time when . . . happened, or was done';* • *'The time before . . .';*
for example:	• *'The time before aeroplanes'* or *'before people lived in houses'.*

The decision about time would then lead to deciding on the place, identity and activity, that is the *where*, the *who* and the *what*.

Identity of characters

'Who are we?' The teacher and the group may together decide upon the broad categories of characters appropriate to the decisions of place and time, but usually the children would decide individually, in pairs or small groups on their particular roles or characters. For example:

The building site	– would suggest various kinds of tradesmen and workmen, delivery people, architects, inspectors etc.
The unknown planet	– may suggest either people who have travelled from earth to the planet or strange fantasy beings who inhabit the planet – or both.
The old wreck	– may suggest divers, biologists, archaeologists, historians, skin divers or holiday makers and sightseers – or both.

Developing background details of *'who we are'* involves asking:

- *Where would these people live, work, travel to?*
- *What sort of work do they do?*
- *What do they do usually?*
- *What more unusual things might they have to do?*
- *Who are we?* can also be the first point decided upon by the group, from which place and time will be developed.

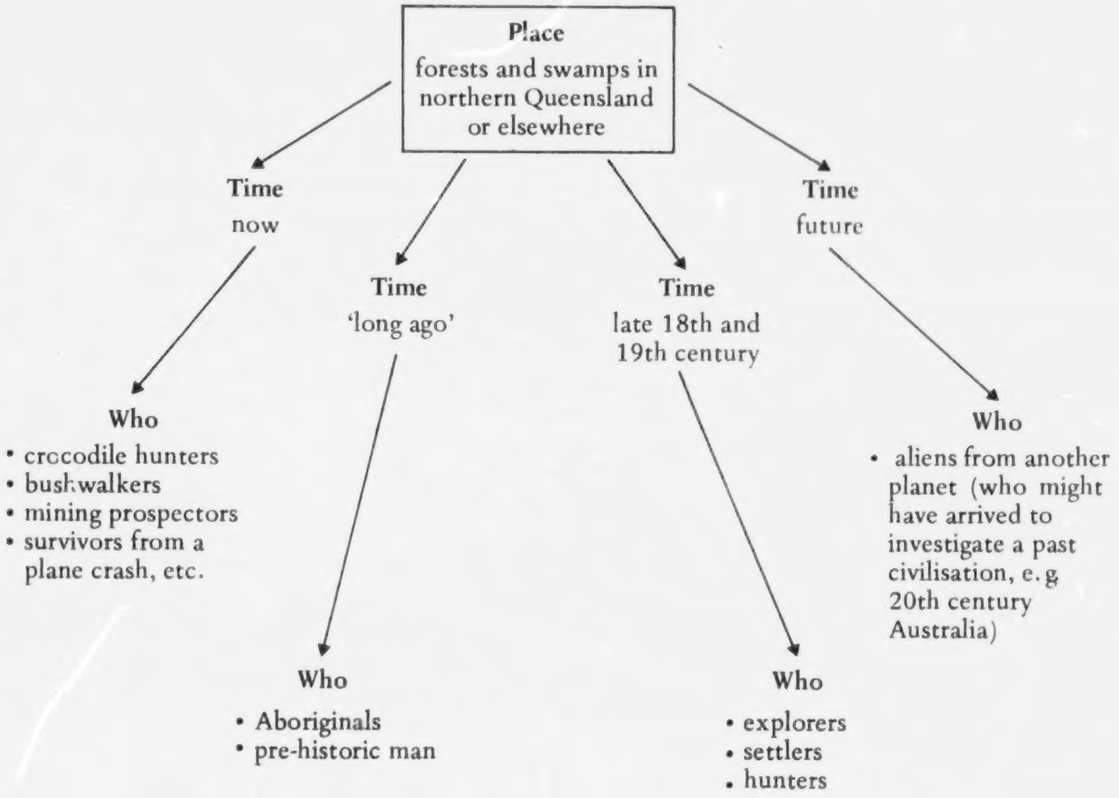
Suggestions for developing possibilities relating to place

Places	Reality	Fantasy
• Living places, houses and shelters:		
– fixed	igloo, cave, flats, hotel, etc.	ice palace, bunyip shelter, rabbit hole.
–moving or moveable	caravan, house-boat, tent, etc.	magic floating island, inside a giant's pocket, a walking house.
• Meeting places	airport, town hall, air-raid shelter, park, etc.	Borrower's meeting-place, inside an old boot.
• Working places	forge, shop, ship, hospital, factory, building site, etc.	workshop of the Maker of Dreams, elfin forge, rainbow workshop.
• Community areas	tribal village, adjacent farms, etc.	land where the Wild Things are, an unknown planet.
• Vehicles (suggesting journeys)	ocean-liner, canoe, raft, bus, space-capsule, etc.	a flying saucer, broomstick, a water-lily boat.

Developing possibilities and making choices

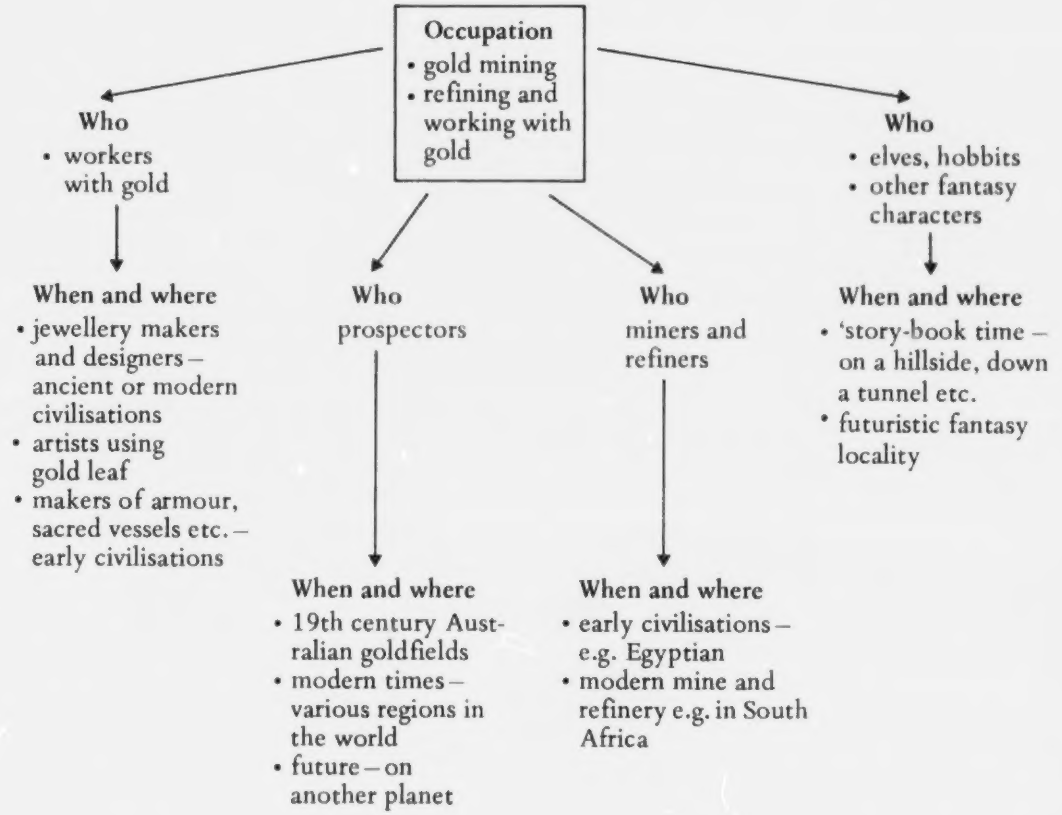
To summarise the previous suggestions the following diagram may be helpful; in this example choices are made in the order of **place, time, identity.**

1. *Starting point:* a television program about tropical forests and swamps in northern Queensland.


Place
forests and swamps in northern Queensland or elsewhere
Time
now
Time
'long ago'
Time
late 18th and 19th century
Time
future
Who
• crocodile hunters
• bushwalkers
• mining prospectors
• survivors from a plane crash, etc.
Who
• Aboriginals
• pre-historic man
Who
• explorers
• settlers
• hunters
Who
• aliens from another planet (who might have arrived to investigate a past civilisation, e.g 20th century Australia)

What the characters are doing and why, may arise out of the decisions made about time and identity, or these may stimulate further ideas and choices.

2. *Starting point:* social science topic – gold mining.



Occupation
- gold mining
- refining and working with gold

Who
- workers with gold

When and where
- jewellery makers and designers – ancient or modern civilisations
- artists using gold leaf
- makers of armour, sacred vessels etc. – early civilisations

Who
prospectors

When and where
- 19th century Australian goldfields
- modern times – various regions in the world
- future – on another planet

Who
miners and refiners

When and where
- early civilisations – e.g. Egyptian
- modern mine and refinery e.g. in South Africa

Who
- elves, hobbits
- other fantasy characters

When and where
- 'story-book time – on a hillside, down a tunnel etc.
- futuristic fantasy locality

These examples are by no means exhaustive, but indicate how some of the possibilities inherent in a starting point may be developed by asking WHO? WHERE? WHEN? and WHAT? It is usually the WHY and the HOW that are developed during the interactions between the characters in the drama, and from which the essential tension grows.

Occupation, work or activity
Young children may find it difficult to focus on who they are in the drama other than by means of some broad category usually defined by the occupation or work of that category of person e.g. the driver, the postman, 'the person who sorts out the letters', a doctor etc. Therefore work activities

often become the most motivating way to bring young children into a drama. As they begin their work they can begin to think about who they are and gradually be helped into a role. This obviously has implications for the choice of place which should allow for or encourage activities the children enjoy and on which they can focus with enthusiasm.

With older children who have had some experience of drama, physical work and occupations may not be quite as important in generating enthusiasm and motivation, nevertheless, while involved in the doing, they are able to consider who they are and why they are doing whatever the activity is. For these and other reasons the balance between talking and doing is important.

Journeys

Journeys are useful pivot points that can start or give impetus to drama. Journeys provoke questions such as:

- Why are we going on this journey?
- Who are we? What sort of people would go on a journey like this?
- When does this journey take place?
- Do we know each other or not?
- How are we going on the journey?
- Where are we from? Where are we going?
- What preparations do we need to make for the journey?
- What might happen along the way?

An example of topic development through questioning

One teacher wrote about how she developed the theme of *buying and selling* by using the question framework.

> *First of all the students and I considered* WHERE *the buying and selling might take place – we developed a 'vocabulary of situation' e.g. supermarket, department store, roadside stall, canteen, boat, market, camel train, native village, office etc.*
>
> *Next we considered* WHAT *might be sold and* WHO *might be buying.*
>
> *Then we considered* HOW *buying and selling might take place – we developed a vocabulary relating to ways of purchasing goods and making transactions.*

WHERE	WHO	WHAT	HOW
Native village	natives from two different villages	pigs, tools, etc.	bartering
Arms factory, USA	government officials – sales department: factory workers: experts: secretary: etc.	arms	government contract: perhaps no exchange of money or cheque
Stables	boy and father	horses	cash
Post office	office clerk post office employees general public	stamps postal order	cash
Arab market	Arab family Arab traders	dates, salt, dried meat, linen	bartering
Shipyard	government official, ship building representative or official	ship	contract–details of which must be discussed
Supermarket	general public supermarket employees	groceries	cash and cheques
Street corner	undercover agent	industrial plans or official documents	cash or an exchange agreement

We then looked at the critical activity that goes into purchasing or selling e.g. the different points to look for when buying a horse or a cake! The different skills and knowledge required to sell a battleship or a length of material. What does the buyer need to look for, what does the seller have to show the customers?

Having discussed a range of possibilities, in pairs or small groups the students selected one of the ideas that had been discussed OR a completely new one.

In their groups they discussed the WHO, WHERE, WHAT and HOW of their situation and worked out how this short piece of action might occur. The children were called upon to see what they knew of a given situation. The emphasis is on gaining individual and group understanding of the situation before attempting to improvise it. This gives some security for the students as it supplies common ground upon which to build their drama.

B. Using Story as a Basis for Drama

Many stories introduce ideas and themes which can be explored through drama. With younger children it is sensible to use an idea or short section of the story rather than attempting to use all of it. This latter course may result in mechanical enacting of a sequence of events with little depth to the work.

With older children and particularly with secondary students, an analogy to the story, novel or play might provide the means whereby the story itself is illuminated so that the students begin to perceive the underlying themes and concerns. Much of the success of drama work from a story will depend upon the teacher's enthusiasm for the story and the way in which it has been introduced, read or told to the children. The teacher's ability to involve the children in storybuilding activities and the ability to read or tell a story well are most important. (See also storybuilding and telling in *Talking, Listening, Storybuilding and Telling* booklet.)

There are many sources for story material:

- Legends, myths
- Bible stories
- Narrative poems and activity rhymes
- Illustrated stories for young children
  (e.g. The Picture Puffin Books)
- Traditional and folk tales
- Stories told and heard from various sources
- Novels and short stories
- Pictures and photographs.

Stories can be used in various ways:

1. One idea, event or episode from the story can be the focus for elaboration. The drama can stay closely to the original but the children can add appropriate imaginary detail: e.g.

(a) 'The Elves and the Shoemaker'
in *The Fairy Tale Treasury*
illustrated by Raymond Briggs
Puffin Books, 1972.

Place: the shoemaker's shop
Who: the elves
What: working at making shoes
Brief discussion: about their shoes, parts of a shoe, what shoes are made of, tools they would need.

- Some of the questions discussed might be:
  - *How big would the shoes for humans seem to the elves?*
  - *What would the elves talk about as they work?*
  - *What do the elves know about the shoemaker and his wife?*
  - *When and how have the elves seen and listened to them?*
  - *Who might buy the shoes they are making?*
  - *What do they know about the humans in the village?*

- In pairs the children find a space and set up their shop:
  - each pair works as elves making shoes for the shoemaker
  - they talk to one another as they work.

  Note: In this activity the children go quickly into role as the elves and do not first plan details of what they are going to do.
- The teacher moves amongst the children helping them to extend their play.
- Later, the children might make up stories about other times they (the elves) have helped humans, what sort of help they gave, who they helped and what happened.

(b) A variation of this method of using one event of a story and elaborating it, involves the teacher taking a role to give a unifying focus. This method is particularly useful with young children who can then work individually, interacting mainly with the teacher, as in the following example:

The Five Chinese Brothers
by Clair H. Bishop and Kurt Wiese,
Scholastic Book Services, 1938.

Focus: finding things under the sea.

- The teacher is in role as the brother who swallows the sea, while the children find imaginary objects.
- They tell each other and the teacher what they have found.
- This is a simple drama activity to help young children to share ideas and listen to one another.

(c) In the next example the children work in pairs or small groups and the teacher is the unifying agent:

We Never Get to do Anything
by Martha Alexander, Picture Puffin, 1976.

Place: the shopping centre
Who: shopkeepers
What: keeping shop.

- After hearing the story read aloud the children discuss the illustrations, particularly the shops in the shopping centre, and shopping centres they know.
  - *Where are we?*
  - *Work with a partner in your shop.*
  - *What are you selling?*
  - *What do you need to do first thing in the morning when you get to your shop?*
  - *What do your goods cost?*
- The teacher takes on the role of a harrassed parent looking for a lost child, enquiring from shop to shop, and accepting or initiating offers of help from the children, to bring about interaction between the groups.
- At the end of the activity, the children tell the story of the lost child, what happened and who found him.

2. A story can trigger off a similar idea, that is, the idea is 'translated' into another setting, for example:

The Village Tree by Taro Yashima, Viking Seafarer Books, 1972. This is about a tree on the banks of a river that is the favourite playing and meeting place for the village children.

- Using the idea of a tree and its environs being a meeting place, the teacher might suggest developing their own favourite playing place:
  - *What does our tree look like?*
  - *Where does it grow?*
  - *Let's go for a walk – what do we see?* (The scene is built up during the drama.)
  - *What can we see near us – or far away?*
  - *While I sit under the tree, see what interesting things (insects, stones etc.) you can find, come and show them to me, or call a friend to look at them.*
  - *What other things could we do at our special tree? e.g. have a picnic, or play games etc.*
- At the end of the 'day' we sit down and talk about what we did.

3. Stories about communities can be used either to develop the community suggested in the story or to develop a similar community; for example:
The Happy Lion by Louise Fatio, Picture Puffins, 1968, could be used to develop the French town of the text and illustrations, using the French names for the various shops and possibly learning simple French phrases. The lion's visit to the town might have happened before the drama begins or be used during the drama.

OR – *Where might* our *town be?*
– *Is our town near the sea? What is the climate like?*
– *What are the occupations of the people who live here?*

4. Drama can be developed about what might have happened before the given events of the story; or the drama might continue the story by developing what happened after the story ended. For instance, one class made up a story about a giant who lived alone in the hills near a village. He was dirty, quarrelsome and had no manners, so the other giants had sent him away to live by himself. His only friend was Big Bill who visited him very occasionally and took him juicy bones to eat. From this story the children and their teacher decided to take on the roles of the people living in the village near the giant, Bad John. The drama began with the teacher in role as a visitor to the village asking the children about a rumour she had heard that there had been some trouble during the night. This led to a meeting at which the children recounted the damage done by Bad John to their houses, shops and gardens during the night.

The drama became a sequel to their original story and they attempted to find reasons why Bad John was dirty, quarrelsome and mannerless. The problems they raised and attempted to solve were:

- how to make Bad John happy so he would not damage their property (*they gave him a birthday party and his favourite food*)

- how to cheer him up and make him laugh (*they wrote and drew jokes and illustrated 'funny' idioms*)
- how to encourage him to be clean (*they made him new smart clothes and wrote to Big Bill for help in getting Bad John to wash before he put on the new clothes*)
- how to teach him manners (*the imaginary giant supposedly sat still and watched while they demonstrated good manners and bad manners in various circumstances*).

Bad John's progress was made more vivid by the teacher writing letters to the class as from Big Bill, and the children wrote back. The giants remained imaginary throughout i.e. no one took on the roles of the giants.

5. A story can be divided up into episodes and each episode tackled by a small group of students. For instance the story of Ben Hall, the bushranger, in 'The Death of Ben Hall' an anonymous poem (in *This Land:* an anthology of Australian poetry for young people, edited by M.M. Flynn and J. Groom, published by Pergamon Press, 1968) was read to the students who discussed it and with the teacher's help divided it into six episodes:
(i) Ben Hall's first visit to the hut.
(ii) His so-called friend learning about the reward.
(iii) The traitor's visit to the court to give information about Ben Hall.
(iv) Ben Hall's second visit to the hut.
(v) The ambush.
(vi) The traitor is shunned by his friends in the pub.

One particular scene became the focus for each separate group. The teacher's questions were essential to develop depth and credibility in the work e.g. *Where was the traitor when he first knew about the reward? Why was he in town? Where did he see the 'wanted' poster?*

Small groups of 4 or 5 worked simultaneously on their improvisations; these were shared and the class watched to see what information was being given by each group. They then discussed and devised ways of linking the scenes.

Another example of the use of episodes of a story for drama is given in the extended example no. 3 using *Egrin and the Painted Wizard*, page 39).

6. Drama can also develop from the necessity to expand an underlying theme or meaning in a story. In this case some elements of the original story may be maintained but the events may be entirely different. Extended example no. 5 on page 45 describes an attempt to probe a little into the nature of the 'ills' that Pandora's Box released upon the world. By translating what is shown in the original story through a metaphorical mode into a realistic situation, the inner truth of the story becomes clearer.

The drama attempts to show how negative or selfish attitudes can affect others and may eventually affect a whole community.

7. The main issues of a story can be developed by an analogy. For instance, reactions to authority as brought out in *The Machine Gunners* by Robert Westall, (Puffin Books, 1972) might be the focus for the following drama exercise from which a drama might develop using characters, locality and a period quite different from those described in the book:

- The whole group might work together or divide into two or three groups.
- One person chooses an authority role but does not disclose it to the others.
- The remainder of the group decide where they are, whether they are adults or children, and what it is they will try to conceal.
- The authority figure arrives and the others engage him or her in conversation, trying to prevent discovery of the concealed object or information, or they may try to decoy the person away by some credible talk or action.

C. Drama Games

Drama games are sometimes over-used by teachers because they seem clear cut and 'safe' but they can be rather limiting unless they are used imaginatively and extended into further drama activities.

This is how one teacher used and developed the drama game called:

AGREEMENTS

- The whole group stood in a big circle and I explained that on a signal, they would have to make an agreement with someone opposite them to change places – but that they would not make the change-over until I gave the signal.
- Initially agreements were made by asking someone to change, e.g. '*Will you change places with me, Jane?!* and Jane replied.
- When all the agreements were made, I gave a signal and everyone changed places. As you can imagine chaos resulted! So we stopped and discussed how we could change over without bumping into others. Then we tried it again.
- Next, I asked them to make an agreement with a different person more or less opposite them, but not to use speech at all – just a signal of some sort – then we changed over again.
- We then tried using faces only to signal an agreement, and later eyes only – very difficult!
- We then discussed:
  WHERE we might be – a market place, busy airport etc.
  WHO we might be – stall-holders, travellers etc.
  WHY we were hurrying – and developed a drama from the market idea.

Using a prop or piece of costume

A variety of starting points can be developed this way, e.g. one class made these suggestions:

1. A CHAIR

– *Where might this chair be?*	doctor's waiting room, office, castle, bank, etc.
– *What else do we sit on?*	motorbike, bank of river, horse, fence, rocks, etc.
– *Who might sit on these things?*	patient, king, pirate, fisherman, worker, bikie, picknicker, kid
– *What might they be doing?*	waiting to have a toe checked out by the doctor, waiting to see the captain of the guards, etc.
– *Why might they be doing that?*	been hurt at footie, captain of the guard has a prisoner to see the king, etc. (see page 61 for further development of this idea).

2. A PIECE OF MATERIAL (one piece for each pair or group)

– *What might this be?*	an apron, a sari, a turban
– *How might this be used?*	a veil, a rope, etc.
– *Who is using it or wearing it?*	a nurse, a princess, a street sweeper, a nun, a sailor, etc.
– *Where is this person?*	in an air-raid shelter, in a palace, on the pavement, on a ship etc.
– *What might they be doing?*	taking a patient to shelter during a bombing raid, feeding the fish, raising the anchor, etc.

Join in the activity

This involves one person starting an activity or saying something to which another person responds according to the clues given, **without the two people concerned making any prior plan or agreement.** In other words the WHERE – WHO – WHAT and WHY are picked up from clues given by the participants who agree to accept and use the clues given and are ready to change any preconceptions they may have about the drama as it grows. This activity helps develop quick thinking and generous play.

- The children sit or stand in a large circle.
- The space within the circle is nominated to be, for example, a building site, on board ship etc. OR the group must pick up a clue from the initiator of the activity **without** first deciding on the place.
- The teacher or a child goes into the activity space and starts an activity.
- A child comes in to help the first person.
- They begin to talk about what they are doing.
- A third person joins them and the activity grows.
- Once 7 or 8 children are involved in the activity space, the teacher may ask them to begin to find a credible way out of the drama e.g. *'Well, my watch is over now – I'll turn in to get some sleep.'* or *'Those bricks haven't been delivered yet – I'll go off now and phone the brickworks.'*

This activity can be adapted for use with primary and secondary groups. It can be used in pairs or small groups as well as being a large group activity (see also extended example no. 7 on page 50).

Observation games

(i) SIGNALMAN is a game to develop observation and concentration using a variety of visual and sound signals.

- The whole group sit or stand in a big circle, and while one person (sometimes two or three people) is outside, the group choose a signalman. When the 'detectives' return, various movements (e.g. hand movements, changes of position) are made, each change being initiated by the signalman and copied at once by the rest of the group. The 'detectives' try to find out who is initiating the changes. The group devise ways to watch each other so as not to give the signalman away, and to keep the 'detectives' guessing.
- The game can be played with variations e.g. using sounds which are repeated and changed as led by the signalman. The group also develop various other tactics to protect the signalman.
- The group may decide how many guesses the detectives may have before new detectives are chosen.
- As an extension, the group might decide WHY there is a need for this secrecy, WHO they are, WHERE they are and WHAT they plan to do.

(ii) Another game for older primary and lower secondary students is PRISONERS which is an extension of Signalman.

- The group sit or kneel in a large circle, fairly close together – or the group may divide into two or three separate circles. A guard is appointed for each circle (or two guards if the whole group is together).
- The students agree to be prisoners who are busy working, e.g. scrubbing floors, weeding, making mail bags etc. but still keeping close together in the circle. The rule of the prison is NO TALKING.
- As they work they are trying to pass a message to one person in the circle. The 'message' may be a small piece of paper, a key or other small object. The group decide who is to receive the message.
- The guards patrol on the outside of the circle, and before the game begins, the group decide how many times the guards may ask a prisoner to open his or her hands.
- Again, by asking WHY they are imprisoned, WHO they are, WHAT they plan to do, WHERE the prison is situated, a drama can be developed.

SECTION 3
DEVELOPING A STRUCTURE

Structures: procedures and teaching techniques

This section deals with ways of organising and coming to grips with material in order to explore whatever issues the children and the teacher decide upon. Although material is suggested in order to clarify explanations with specific examples, the actual materials and issues to be used (the meanings of which the children are to explore) should be relevant to the children, their interests and stage of development.

For example:

- the teacher might wish the children to think about helpfulness and might use 'The Elves and the Shoemaker' as a way to introduce the idea
- the students may have a pre-occupation with violence and wish to depict it, so the teacher might on one hand satisfy their interest while at the same time leading them to consider some of the reasons for and realities of violence (see also extended example no. 6 page 47).

Often the issues or meanings to be explored will affect the structure and there will be certain common elements or purposes even if the children are working in pairs or small groups on separate tasks or small dramas.

For example:

- a decision to explore survival might involve having to agree that everyone is in the same place at the same time;
- a decision to explore ways of asking for help or making a complaint tactfully and politely, might involve each group having a different place and characters, but all having a common purpose and meaning, i.e. to ask for help, or to complain.

Planning the introduction

When planning a drama session it is necessary to plan the beginning in great detail so that the teacher knows exactly how the stimulus material or task will be introduced to the children. However, once the children begin to develop the 'simulated reality' of the drama, the teacher then begins to pick up ideas from the children, and to use techniques and procedures which will develop and extend the children's own ideas, decisions and actions, as and when they seem appropriate. Teaching and learning involve taking risks, being willing to try out new ideas or techniques and being honest enough to admit when they do not work. A frank discussion of unsuccessful aspects and breakdown points within the drama itself, its structure and organisation will be helpful and enlightning to both teachers and their classes and give children more responsibility for their work.

Defining objectives

The teacher plans a program, a series of lessons or individual drama sessions bearing in mind:

1. the material which the children are to explore through drama. This material will usually be chosen by the children and teacher together, and arise from particular interests current in the classroom. Sometimes material will be chosen to introduce new topics and ideas.
2. the meanings that are inherent in the material to be used and which the teacher expects will be illuminated through the drama process.
3. the criteria for these particular drama experiences based on the children's needs, stage of development and degree of experience (see page 7).

From a consideration of these points, the teacher will arrive at certain specific objectives which will underly the detailed planning. The structure of a session or series of drama activities will arise from the materials, the procedures and teaching techniques which the teacher employs in order to realise the specific objectives which have been chosen.

Procedures

The organisation of space and equipment, decisions about group sizes and the kinds of work to be used are included under this heading; in other words, the 'mechanics' of the lesson.

(i) *Space*

The amount of space available will affect the type of work chosen, but with forethought and imagination what may at first appear to be a limitation in this regard may become a stimulus or help in creating the drama. For example:

- furniture rearranged may make a tunnel through which the children enter an imaginary cave
- desks may become shops, stalls or houses.

A very large hall may be cut down to a smaller area by unrolling a large roll of corrugated card to screen off part of it.

(ii) *Equipment*

Rostra or drama blocks and large kindergarten blocks are useful for many purposes in drama. They can be used to represent houses, a mountain, a castle etc. but the teacher may need to limit their use to walls of structures, and provide cardboard for roofing purposes.

Rostra blocks can also be used to vary the floor levels for various purposes.

Tape recorders, percussion instruments and a few simple costumes or props may be useful.

(iii) *Group sizes*

Young children tend usually to work alone or alongside others rather than with them; therefore they need a strong focus e.g. the teacher in role, or the teacher's stimulating questions or comments to quicken their thinking as they work individually. Gradually they begin to work with a partner in simple pair activities. Usually their individual or pair activities will have a common place or purpose so that the teacher can still provide a strong focus.

In the primary and secondary grades, students are able to work in groups of varying sizes, but where they have had little experience of drama activities, it is often useful to work up gradually to larger group activities i.e. to progress from individual to pair work and then to working in small groups, before large group activities are introduced. However, this will depend on the teacher's confidence and the degree of co-operation that exists between members of the class.

(iv) *Types of activities*

Within the drama session, the teacher may use various related aspects of work such as:

- expressive movement
- verbal dynamics
- drama games *(see section 2, page 22)*
- puppetry
- storybuilding and telling
- talking and listening activities
- sound making activities
- construction

(All these activities are explained in detail in the relevant booklets of the Speech and Drama Framework.)

Perusal of the seven extended examples in Section 4, will show how various of these activities can be used within the structure of the drama session.

Teaching techniques

In order to develop the drama, the teacher may need to use various teaching techniques which will help the children:

- to make and hold to an agreement to participate in the drama
- to deepen their commitment and consolidate their knowledge of the situation
- to develop information and background about themselves within the drama situation, and share this information with others engaged in the drama.

The teacher may also use a variety of techniques to stimulate further development of the drama, introduce other issues, illuminate meanings and implications and provide opportunities for language development.

These techniques might include:

- the teacher taking a role within the drama and another adult or other children occasionally joining in for a short period

- letters and other documents written to the characters in the drama to stimulate further thought or action
- constraints such as limiting the materials or space; for example: *'You have no nails, how are you going to build your house?'*

Embedded within these teacher techniques are constraints and limits which impose controls on the drama and the people within it. Six useful teaching techniques are discussed below. There are others which teachers will devise as they become more skilled in listening to the children and helping them to develop their own ideas.

1. *Making and holding to an agreement* (i.e. to participate within the 'pretend' situation of the drama) might include:

- having to sign a document e.g. as passengers about to board a ship; as people in war-time reporting for civilian duties or receiving a ration book; as workers signing on at the job or receiving their pay
- having to buy a ticket for a journey and giving personal (in character) details
- drawing up personal papers or a passport to be used within the drama
- making a list of belongings or supplies needed on a journey or expedition
- undergoing a simple ritual or ceremony to 'become' a member of a tribe e.g. ceremoniously putting on a simple headband they have made.

2. *Deepening commitment, developing credibility and consolidating knowledge* might involve:

- drawing up a map or plan showing where their farms are situated, and where the river is; or where the air raid shelters are, etc.
- writing a letter or drawing up a petition
- introducing another adult (who has had nothing to do with the drama) in role as, for example, a reporter to whom the children would have to explain their situation, any problems, etc.
- introducing children from another class in role as visitors to the town, travellers, new arrivals, new settlers, so that the children established within the drama have to explain, describe and show the newcomers their situation, skills, etc.
- helping uncommitted or disruptive children to find a place within the drama, supporting and encouraging their efforts and responses through questions and comments which press them to see the implications of the character they have chosen and decisions they have made. For example, if the child as a settler decides that he is injured and dies, the teacher might decide to stop the drama and discuss whether the group are willing to accept this event and if so how will it affect their drama? If they accept his 'death' that child will have to 'stay dead' for that session, as the rest of the group discuss what they knew about him, plan his funeral and attempt to absorb his decision (i.e. to die) into the drama.

3. *Developing information and sharing it with others* by means of:

- introductions to others in the group, at a meeting, round a camp fire using name-game techniques (see *Talking and Listening*)
- telling stories of their ancestors, their past lives, legends, etc. using storybuilding techniques (see *Storybuilding and Telling*)
- the teacher drawing a map while the children contribute information about the terrain, etc.
- writing a community newspaper, with news items, advertisements and notices
- holding a meeting to ask for information, discuss a problem and decide upon possible courses of action
- sharing a meal while the group talks over the day's events.

4. *Stimulating further development in the drama* by:

- introducing an adult in role as a character who might change or give impetus to the course of the drama e.g. the governor arrives on an unexpected visit; a poor destitute man or woman suffering from amnesia is brought into the community; a survivor from a shipwreck is washed up onto the island etc.
- letters or other written material e.g. a proclamation posted outside the meeting hall, a letter or telegram giving new information to add a problem, or to suggest means of solving a problem, but within the context of what has already been established
- replies to the letters written by the children in their roles within the drama; these replies might be written by the teacher or an adult outside the drama e.g. as market stall-holders the children have written letters protesting about rises in stall rentals, and they receive typewritten replies from 'The Town Clerk' inviting them to a meeting, or asking for further written information.

5. *Slowing down the drama to provoke thought* by the use of:

- rituals which spring from questions and suggestions such as:
  - *Take from your bundle or luggage your most prized possession and tell us something about it.*
  - *Can you prove that you will be a useful member of the community? What can you do? What skills have you?*
  - *Take out the tool you have brought that will make you a useful member of our community – and tell us about it.*
  - *What are you going to do with this money you have earned?*
  - *As the ships leave this country where we were born and grew up, think about the things you'll remember best about it. Why have you chosen to go to the new land?*
  - *We are the only people who have survived the shipwreck – what have you in your pockets? – all our other possessions are lost.*

6. *The teacher in role*

Although the teacher need not adopt a definite role within the drama, his or her interest, commitment and empathetic support are absolutely vital to the effectiveness of the drama as a learning process. Even if not in role as a particular character within the drama, the teacher should be able to identify with it e.g. a question to the children would then be phrased as *'What are we going to do? All our crops have been destroyed?'* rather than *'What will you villagers do now that your crops have been destroyed?'*

Many teachers find the most valuable way in which they can monitor and guide the drama is to take on a role within it. The teacher may decide to take on various roles at different times and at other times to come out of role altogether and speak to the children as their teacher.

- With young children, the teacher may find it useful to take a role which becomes the focus for the drama i.e. a role which draws and holds the activities together e.g.:
  - the sad king whose subjects are finding ways to make him laugh and be happy;
  - the old grandmother who protects the children from the witch by the strong, safe magic rhymes she knows that change them into other things so the witch cannot find them;
  - the mother who has lost her child and who goes from house to house (or shop to shop) looking and asking for the child.

Other roles might include:

- an 'enquiring' role e.g. the lady diarist who has arrived to observe and write about this community; a reporter who has heard about the giant or the king, and wants to find out more about him. An enquiring role gives the children opportunities to describe, explain, justify and reason about events in the drama.

- a 'controlling' role e.g. the captain of the ship, the governor, the lord mayor, the king etc. A controlling role is useful when initiating drama with children who have had little experience.

- a 'supporting' role e.g. the king's advisor, the bosun on the ship, a wise woman in the village etc. A supporting role gives the teacher opportunities to monitor and 'pace' the drama to provide greater depth and thoughtfulness.

- a 'provoking' role, such as the 'problem' person in a situation e.g. the greedy old woman who expects everyone else to provide for her; a tyrannical king or governor. This role is more difficult to use and usually needs the help of a second adult to guide, control or modify the children's reactions to the 'provoking' adult.

Using dramatic form

> *It is only in the act of expressing something that we fully understand what it is that we are trying to say . . . So in the arts meaning emerges and is crystallized in the act of making the expressive statement. The search for form begins with the search for meaning itself.*[7]

After discussion and reflection on the meaning of the drama they have been engaged in, older children need to focus on how they arrived at particular moments in the drama, when they first realised that a particular problem or situation (raised within the drama) existed, how they knew, who or what started it, what the climax was and so on. In other words, having reflected upon the particular meanings developed during the drama, they are now led to reflect upon the ways in which they expressed these meanings. This will involve them in recalling, reconstructing and reorganising the 'reality' they have created and learning to recognise and analyse the elements they have put together in the drama process.

They are now beginning to reflect upon dramatic form and how it is used to express the meanings they had in mind. They might, for instance, look closely at a particular moment, what led up to it and how the situation changed and developed after that important moment. As they discuss and analyse what they have done they can go back to a particular point in the drama and reshape the elements that led to the climax, in order to clarify and sharpen the meaning. As one teacher expressed it:

> *Often the climax of the story is the only part the children concentrate on, so I ask them instead to focus on and work at reshaping:*
> *– what led up to that moment?*
> *– what happened after it?*
> *Learning to use climax means being able to sandwich the meat between the layers of before and after!*

As they analyse and reshape the drama, making it clearer and more concise, students begin to identify tension and recognise it as the basic ingredient of dramatic form. They learn that tension can be produced by external threat e.g. drought, aggression from other communities etc. or internally as tensions build up within a community. They learn too that conflict produces tension but that tension does not always require a situation of conflict. They learn to manipulate tension by deliberately building up, slowing down or speeding up the moments leading up to and away from the climax point.

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[7] McGregor, Lynn et al. *Learning through Drama:* Report of the Schools Council Drama Teachers Project (10-16), Heinemann Educational Books, 1977. p. 91

NOTE: What's wrong with *'Go away and make up a play about . . . , and come back in twenty minutes to show us.'*?

Secondary students who have had experience in building and developing drama with the guidance of the teacher, may from time to time find it valuable to have total control of the drama they are making, using their knowledge of dramatic form to communicate meaning.

However, as a basic mode of operation this method is far from satisfactory because it is unlikely to lead to significant gains in learning. This method of working has been a major cause in developing attitudes to drama which have relegated it to the 'frills' area of education. Teachers need therefore to be aware of the disadvantages of working in this way:

- This method of working implies showing work to others, usually with scant attention to the meaning to be communicated. In other words, it does not encourage exploration of the meaning because of the pressure to show work to others.
- Once a group of students begin to work on a given task in this way, it is difficult for the teacher to provide effective guidance to extend thinking or skills, if the work appears to be unsatisfactory.
- Often the work tends to degenerate into clichéd situations, caricature and stereotypes (see also note on humour and 'send-ups', page 57).
- The discussion after the showing is seldom constructive and any useful advice usually comes too late to be acted upon.

Primary children in particular, need the security of a basic structure and a clearly defined focus as well as the teacher's continual help and encouragement in expanding and clarifying their ideas.

SECTION 4
SEVEN EXTENDED EXAMPLES

Beginnings need careful and thorough planning. After that, teachers have to take risks and learn to 'think on their feet', being ready to take up whatever ideas come from the children and using these to make the drama grow.

The problem with writing down the examples of drama sessions used in this section, is that although these dramas grew out of the children's ideas once they had progressed beyond the planned beginnings, when written down, they look like a military exercise! The written form, then, fails to communicate the sense of excitement and adventure inherent in drama as both teacher and children develop and expand their ideas.

1. Drama for an infant grade *–as recorded by the teacher*

Activity	**Teaching procedures and techniques**
1st SESSION	
Stimulus: extensions to the school buildings were being carried out. I obtained permission from the Clerk of Works to take the children round the site. We saw a wide variety of activities being carried out, including plastering, varnishing lengths of wood, electricians wiring, men using wheel-barrows to cart concrete, men using drills etc. The children listened attentively to the various sounds on the site and they talked to the workmen who explained what they were doing.	Advantage taken of interesting activity close at hand.
We returned to the classroom and talked about all we had seen and heard, and about all the jobs that we had seen the workmen doing.	Discussion.
2nd SESSION	
In the open space, we walked about and recalled what we had noticed about the site. Through talk and movement we built up our imagined building site, walking about and deciding where the various locations and objects were.	Movement and recall.
The children chose what work they wanted to do and most of them decided to work with one or two others. We located the plasterers, the painters, those who were digging a trench 'outside' and so on.	

Example no. 1 *cont'd*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
I introduced the question: *'What do these people do when they first get to work each day?'* Some of them knew about 'clocking on' and explained to the others that their fathers 'clocked on' at work each day.	Teacher raises new issues.
We then talked about what we would wear to work and what we'd bring with us.	
I then gave each child a card and asked them to write their names on it. We then located 'clocks' (tables) for each group. Had I been working with younger children I would probably not have suggested that they work in groups.	Technique to deepen belief in and commitment to the drama.
Each person arrived at the site at the beginning of a day – we all clocked on, put our lunch bags down, greeted friends and began our work.	Drama begins.
At that point I had not thought of taking a role, but was walking about as an interested observer questioning and trying to get the children to think more about what they were doing. Then various children began coming to me with requests for more concrete, bricks etc. and I suggested they phone the brickworks, or make out an order for concrete. They began to address me as 'boss' – so I took up the suggestion and took on the role of Clerk of Works.	Teacher takes up an idea from the children that he should be in role too.
I then called a meeting while we ate our lunch. We discussed progress we had made, what supplies were needed and what we should do next. We also discussed jobs that were difficult to do and why they were difficult, i.e. drilling, because the drill was hard to hold as it shook a lot.	Teacher uses a meeting technique to bring the group together to share information and to recall what they had done.
3rd SESSION Our next work day began in the same way. The children really seemed to enjoy this: I think it felt safe and familiar and gave them confidence to repeat something	Repetition gives the children a sense of security and confidence.

Example no. 1 *cont'd*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
they had done before. After clocking on and greeting one another happily, they began to work.	
This time there was more interaction between groups and between members of the same group. They helped each other, borrowed tools, and talked about what they were doing as they worked.	Interaction is developing as commitment grows.
Quite spontaneously one child who was off-loading bricks and stacking them beside a wall, seemed to stumble, then he got up clutching his arm. A workmate led him to me and the injured child told me how he had been stacking bricks when the stack had fallen on his hand and arm. By then a small group had collected round him and one child said she had done all her Red Cross tests, so she would look after him. Another child ran to fetch the first aid box, while another bricklayer complained to me that this shouldn't have happened; too many accidents happened when people were working. So we decided to call a meeting to discuss the problem.	Problem suggested by one child's imaginative involvement is taken up and used to further the drama.
At the meeting the children discussed the accident that had happened and the things they had noticed that could cause or lead to an accident. We discussed and decided upon various safety measures.	Drama consolidated: events recalled and elaborated. Information shared by using technique of a meeting.
We read and enjoyed *Boy, was I Mad!* by Kathryn Hette, Picture Lions, 1969. We also made an extensive frieze to go in the passage outside our room of the building site. The figures were drawn and painted then cut out and stuck onto the background. Some of the figures were made of collage materials. We all agreed it really looked good when we had done – the children noticed especially that the figures looked as if they were working – *'They look good 'cause they're dirty from the work!'* said one boy with satisfaction. Another child suggested that we make a tape of all the sounds we heard on the site, to go with the pictures, but being nearly end of term we were not able to do that.	Later: extensions and other outcomes.

2. Drama for a lower primary grade

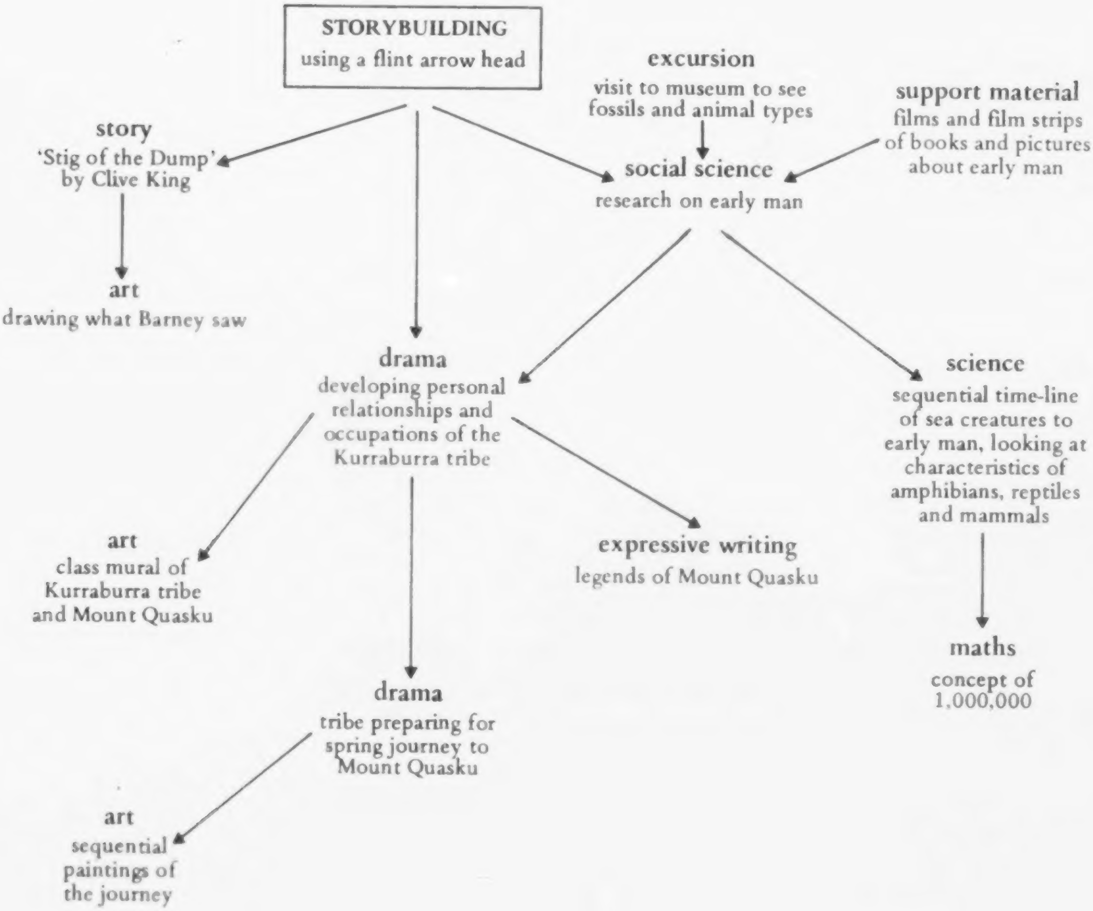
–as recorded by the teacher, and using a story developed by the children from an object.

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
1st SESSION Stimulus: I borrowed a flint from the museum and passed it around as we all sat in a circle. I asked the children to think about this flint and to comment on it if they wished, as they passed it round. They were very quiet and handled it with interest.	(Please see storybuilding procedures in *Storybuilding* booklet.)
What I aimed to do through this drama experience was to help them sense an affinity between themselves and primitive man. It is so easy for most white Australians to view Aboriginals as being utterly different from themselves. Seldom do we ever think about our own descent from pre-historic man. I wanted these children to consider pre-historic man as their own 'beginnings' and not simply shunt the whole matter off onto the Australian Aboriginals. By considering their own affinity to pre-historic man, I hoped that their attitudes to present day primitive cultures would be less detached and patronising –at any rate I hoped their attitudes might shift a little.	*Let's consider the hand that held this flint.* Teacher has pin-pointed the meaning she hopes the children will begin to discover for themselves.
Gradually, using storybuilding techniques, we built up a story of Koolara (black arrow) who was head of the Kurraburra (best hunters) tribe. His hand was strong and weathered, his nails were hard and chipped. He was getting old. Koolara was a great hunter because he made strong arrow heads and always used the beach flint. (As the children made these suggestions I deliberately selected those which were not obviously Australian Aboriginal in their application.)	Storybuilding used as a technique to develop material for the drama.
The tribes lived in the caves a little way up the mountain. From the mouth of the cave you could look down the valley where there was a lake. Opposite the cave was the sacred mountain, Quasku, covered with snow.	
During the next few days we showed a short film and some film strips; our librarian helped us find a number of	Interest created by the flint and the story leads to further research – wanting

Example no. 2 *cont'd*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
books and pictures about pre-historic man. The librarian and I in our discussions with the children encouraged them to think about pre-historic man as our own ancestor.	to know what really happened.
2nd SESSION We recalled all we 'knew' of the Kurraburra tribe, embroidering our original story with all we had found out from the films and books, seeing some of the implications of the facts we had learned.	Teacher helps the children to 'think' themselves into roles as tribal members.
We started to work in chosen areas about the room; as we worked we thought about a name for ourselves.	Individual work as children focus on occupation and a name.
We came back into the circle to share our occupations. In particular we considered the implications of our occupations e.g. the terrain, fauna, flora etc.	Implications of occupations are used to build up an imaginary terrain.
We came back into the circle to tell others our tribal names – I used a simple name game to do this – and we talked about our family relationships.	Name game used to learn new names and relationships.
We wrote the legends of Quasku mountain, after talking about why it was so important to our tribe.	Follow-up in written work.
3rd SESSION As the children came into the room, I greeted them as Koolara: *'Soon it will be time to go to Mount Quasku for the summer ceremonies. Has any one in our tribe seen any of the signs that tell us it is time to go?'*	The teacher takes on a role to give an impetus to the drama, and a firm focus. The children go into the drama now without any preliminary discussion.
The family groups began their preparations; they asked other families for help and discussion. I went round the groups commenting on preparations and questioning the children within my role as Koolara. After a while I said: *'Let us take time, now that all is done, to remember the summer ceremonies of last year and other years gone by – all is ready for us to leave tomorrow – let us tell the tales of the summer ceremonies.'*	Interaction begins. Teacher stimulates further thought and action by supporting and questioning the children.

FLOW CHART SHOWING THE AREAS OF LEARNING RELATED TO THE DRAMA ABOUT THE FLINT


STORYBUILDING
using a flint arrow head
excursion
visit to museum to see fossils and animal types
support material
films and film strips of books and pictures about early man
story
'Stig of the Dump' by Clive King
social science
research on early man
art
drawing what Barney saw
drama
developing personal relationships and occupations of the Kurraburra tribe
science
sequential time-line of sea creatures to early man, looking at characteristics of amphibians, reptiles and mammals
art
class mural of Kurraburra tribe and Mount Quasku
expressive writing
legends of Mount Quasku
maths
concept of 1,000,000
drama
tribe preparing for spring journey to Mount Quasku
art
sequential paintings of the journey

Example no. 2 *cont'd*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
Sitting in a circle we 'recalled' just what the summer ceremonies entailed. We also talked about our memories.	Storybuilding techniques used again to develop information.
From this point we hope to develop the drama further. This may involve our journey to Mount Quasku, the ceremonies and whatever else the children bring up during the drama.	Follow-up possibilities. Teacher has some plan to continue but what eventually happens will depend on the direction suggested by the children.
The 'flow-chart' accompanying this example attempts to show the relationships between drama and other areas of the curriculum.	

3. Drama for a lower primary grade

– using a known story, Egrin and the Painted Wizard *by Amanda Walsh published by Puffin Books, 1972.*

In this example the teacher breaks down the story into a number of episodes that are easy to handle in a number of brief sessions. These are:

1. The journey through the forest;
2. Egrin the wizard and his work;
3. the injured animals and a cure;
4. the painting and the cat's accident;
5. the painted wizard coming alive and doing his evil work;
6. the rain storm and the ending.

Activity	Teaching techniques and procedures
The children knew and enjoyed 'Egrin', in fact it was an old favourite.	
1st SESSION The children and I went on a journey through an imaginary forest; as we went I asked questions and picked up clues for my next question from their answers: – *What might we meet in the forest?* – *How far is it?* – *Is there always a path – how do we travel?* – *Are you alone?*	The teacher's questions help the children to set up a scene – and give them time to 'believe' in the pretend.

Example no. 3 *cont'd*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
– *How would you approach Egrin's house?* – *What does it look like?* – *Is Egrin expecting you?* – *How do you attract his attention?*	Children are working individually to a common focus.
EGRIN THE WIZARD AND HIS WORK – *Tell me about Egrin? What's he like?* – *How do you know he is a man of magic, apart from his clothes?* – *Do you remember any magic he has shared with you?* – *Can we choose a magic spell and offer this in exchange to Egrin?* We all work on magic spells. – *Do we always stand still to say it or are there magic signs, sounds or movements that go with it?*	The children are encouraged to work in small groups to work out a magic spell.
2nd SESSION HELPING AN INJURED ANIMAL – *Tell me about an animal that lives in the forest?* – *What's its name? What's it like?* – *Do you know an adventure it has had?* – *How was it injured today?* – *What happened?*	Pair work.
We went into improvisations based on Egrin meeting an injured animal: I used these questions to obtain some depth and thinking in their work: – *Can you show what happens when you go to Egrin for help one day?* – *How are you injured?* – *How did it happen?* – *What does Egrin do?* – *Can you show me all about it in your scene?*	
THE PAINTING – *Egrin doesn't paint in the usual way – he can use any part of his body to command the brush. He can show the brush where to go with his toes, nose, bottom,*	Ideas from the story used to stimulate movement and to develop a wide variety of ideas about using body parts and

Example no. 3 *cont'd*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
elbow, etc. He paints on the ceiling with his eyes closed, lying on the floor, behind him – and where else?	directions. Children work individually.
– *He mixes his own paints and magics the colours.* – *Paint your wizard – what does he look like?*	(See also *Expressive Movement* booklet.)
NEXT SESSION We will try out ideas about the painted wizard coming alive, and using Egrin's magic wand to do bad tricks. We will then look at what happens when it begins to rain and Egrin comes back. We will probably sit down and I will ask the children, as the forest animals and people, to tell me (as Egrin) all about the painted wizard and what happened.	Further opportunities for pair work and also individual work to a strong focus i.e. the teacher as Egrin. Opportunities for recall and reflection on what has been done.

4. Drama for an upper primary class – *from another teacher*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
1st SESSION Stimulus: an area of social science – the early colonial days. Working space: a medium sized carpeted area used as a library with chairs pushed back in a circle against the book cases. We sat in a big circle and after some discussion we agreed that we would all be white settlers: (a) who have chosen to come to Australia (therefore no convicts in this drama); (b) who are looking for a good place to settle; (c) who have come off a boat but are at the moment travelling on foot, carrying our few belongings.	
Pick up your bundle that you have carried so far – and let us move on. What do we see underfoot? at	Teacher leads the children to build up the imaginary terrain.

Example no. 4 *cont'd*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
eye level? when we raise our heads? What kind of day is it? How could we recognise a good place?	
The action begins as the children pick up their bundles and move through the bush commenting about the trees – good straight branches for building houses – they comment on the distant view and the ground underfoot. At last someone spots a stream.	
Let us stop and rest by the water – we sit in a circle – *where does this water come from? How wide is the river? Where would be the best place to plant crops? Why? What materials are around for building homes?*	The teacher presses the children to think carefully about the landscape and the basic needs it must supply.
Open your bundle and take out your most prized possession. Tell us all what your most prized possession is and why you prize it so highly. Here I needed to help in two particular ways:	Teacher uses a technique to deepen belief and commitment.
(a) to support those whose suggestions brought giggles from the others, e.g. the girl who said her baby was her most prized possession and the boy who said his was a picture of his wife who died some time ago. I needed to support, question and help these two children hold to their belief in what they had chosen. I needed to make comments such as '*We will need to help this woman care for this child, perhaps some of us could help build her a house*', in order to uphold this indication of tenderness and care which others were inclined to rubbish;	Teacher supports and expands the children's ideas. Teacher leads the children to see the implications of their statements.
and	
(b) I needed to help the children make connections between their prized possessions, the other settlers and the imagined terrain, e.g. one said his prized possession was corn seeds; I followed up with a comment about obvious expert knowledge of sowing seed and farming and how valuable his knowledge would be to us. We then talked about the importance of finding fertile	Teacher helps the children through comment and questioning to make connections between their ideas and the body of shared knowledge.

Example no. 4 *cont'd*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
land near the river. One girl said she had seen some good fertile land not far off, and that coming from a family who lived on a farm, she knew it was good soil.	
In groups of 4 or 5 we set about the task of finding materials with which to build a house. We found out how many axes and saws we had between us to cut down trees. *One thing we haven't got – we have no nails – how are we going to build without nails? How can we make the framework and join it together? What do we use for the roof? How do we get the dirt floor flat and even?* As the children worked I helped, questioned and supported their ideas, pressing them to see the consequences of their decisions. I then began to make a fire, collected contributions from several children to make a large stew in my cooking pot (which was my most prized possession). *Gather around the fire now, I've made a good thick kangaroo stew – come along don't let it get cold – bring your plate with you!* We all sat down to eat our meal and talk over the happenings of our day's work.	Teacher imposes constraint (no nails) to get children to think of other ways of joining wood – finding alternatives.
Later we talked about our drama – what it must have been like to be one of the first settlers, how strange and different trees, birds and animals must have seemed to people from another country. We talked about how dependent these people must have been on what they could get from their environment.	Discussion and reflection on the situation we are building up.
One child asked what they would have eaten, so we tried to list the foods and asked our librarian to find us books that would tell us more about those early settlers and their diet.	Drama has made the children aware of what they do not know and want to find out.
2nd SESSION I asked the children to work in the same groups as at the previous session. *We want to know more about the people in this settlement.*	Teacher gives a clear focus. The children are being challenged to become more objective by thinking of how they can

Example no. 4 *cont'd*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
– *Who are they?* – *What are their skills?* – *Where do they come from?*	communicate information to others.
I asked the children to select a location (WHERE) and a group activity (WHAT) which would enable them to give this information to others in the class through the drama they were to prepare. I moved about the groups, helping, questioning, asking them to think of ways of making certain decisions they had made clearer to those who would watch what they had done.	The teacher helps the groups to think more deeply about what they are doing.
When the individual group dramas were ready, they were shared with the rest of the class. Those receiving the information, 'the audience', were asked to focus on the following points: – *What did you find out about the people in the play?* – *What were they doing?* – *How do you think they feel about this place where we have chosen to settle?*	Those watching have a clear purpose – they are looking for certain information.
We watched the plays and compared what had been communicated with what the group had intended to communicate. The groups then continued working to clarify and refine their plays.	*How well have we communicated our ideas?*
We discussed the shared knowledge and in particular two problems that had arisen; it appeared that we had very little medical knowledge amongst us (in one play a man had died of snake bite because no-one knew what to do for him) and the other problem was water, (in one play crops were wilting and the creek was running dry). Either or both of these problems could be used to carry the drama further.	

5. Drama for an upper primary grade – *interpreting a legend*

This example describes a drama set up by the teacher with an experienced group. The teacher was able to call in another teacher who took the role of headman of the village, while she took a 'provoking' role as a demanding elderly woman. The drama took place in one extended session of about two hours.

The teacher wrote as follows:

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
Stimulus: 'Pandora's Box' had been read to the children and I wanted them to consider how negative attitudes develop, and to obtain a deeper understanding of the ills which Pandora's Box is supposed to have released.	When children are used to drama, they cope quite quickly with the basic agreements and decisions that are a necessary preliminary to the drama session.
Using the school hall and the furniture within it, we set up a Greek village having first discovered where and when our drama was to be; the children decided it was 'long ago' on the sea coast of Greece. Using what knowledge they had, they discussed the occupations of the villagers, and decided on the following: – fishermen: mending nets, sorting the catch; – tradesmen: carpenters and stonemasons mending houses; – shoemakers: working in leather; – farmers: growing fruit and vegetables, herding goats and sheep.	The question frame – WHO, WHEN, WHERE, WHAT is used to develop material for the drama.
They discussed their dependence on one another for basic necessities and decided they would barter goods.	
The children divded themselves into small family groups in various areas around the hall. I told them I was an old ailing widow and that being unable to do much for myself, I would need their help.	The teacher in role deliberately plays on the children's helpful and positive attitude towards her, in order to build up an inner tension in the drama.
DRAMA BEGINS In their family groups activity began, e.g. mending nets, repairing homes etc. preparing skins, making shoes, etc. When the activities were established, another teacher who took on the role of headman, visited the groups to remind them of the approaching harvest festival to which they must make a contribution.	Second teacher takes responsibility for organising an event which will give a strong focus and bring the group together.

Example no. 5 *cont'd*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
As the activities continued the groups began a natural interaction, visiting one another to trade and to ask for information and help. Several villagers visited me and it was not long before I had quite a number of children working in lands, bringing me the best of their cream, making butter for me, and generally carrying out my demands. As the drama continued, I became more demanding and unreasonable and absorbed more and more of their time and energy. I criticised what they did, how they did it and the quality of their goods as I demanded more goods and more attention.	This will make the growing tension more obvious to the children.
Then the headman announced that it was time to begin the harvest festival. I was helped to hobble to the temple with various other villagers bearing my produce, my butter, my wine, goatskins, etc. – all of which they had laboured to produce. I was praised by the headman for the bountifulness and quality of my gifts. The villagers then brought their gifts, which were criticised by the headman as being meagre and of poor quality.	Teacher as headman uses ritual of each group having to deliver gifts, to deepen commitment and strengthen their gradually developing antagonism.
By this time the children who at first had been patient and co-operative with my ceaseless demands, were distinctly frustrated and hostile.	
The headman was then able to call a public meeting to discuss the problem, their feelings about this greedy old woman and how her demands had adversely affected their own livelihoods.	Meeting in role used to define the source of tension.
Coming out of role the teacher as headman encouraged the children to discuss their feelings towards me as the demanding, greedy, unreasonable old woman.	
This discussion was extremely important not only in illuminating the inner meanings of 'Pandora's Box' but also in understanding how negative attitudes can develop. Also, it was vital to hold this discussion to let the children	The meeting develops into an out of role discussion as they explore their own feelings and the meaning of the drama and its relationship to the legend.

Example no. 5 *cont'd*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
air their frustrations and anger, and to 'de-role' themselves in this way.	
Further opportunities for de-roling came later as a result of written accounts of the Greek village and the reasons for its dissolution, when after a disastrous drought most of the population moved away.	This writing provided a useful outlet for the tensions built up within the drama.

6. Drama for a lower secondary grade – *as recorded by the teacher*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
1st SESSION Co-operative drama on a large scale demands discussion and a basis of agreement on which to hang a class play. It also means that the students need help to develop a credible and natural setting, if their play is to be convincing – that is, assuming that they wish to work on a reality rather than a fantasy. (This latter point is one they have to discuss and agree upon too.)	Need to make an agreement and also commitment to the activity.
The group decided that they wanted to do a play about a plane crash and hi-jack. We discussed: – *How much do we know about the way people behave during these moments?* 1. Air crew contacting air traffic control tower – what language do they use – what information is swapped? 2. What happens to crew, pilot and passengers during take-off? 3. What do you have to do before you get on a plane after arriving at the terminal?	Teacher sets out to establish the usual routine as a basis for the later unusual developments.
Small groups and pair improvisations resulted. We shared these, discussed them and collected the information to go some way to answering the three questions given above.	Improvisations to build up more information and to develop commitment to the drama.

Example no. 6 *cont'd*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
2nd SESSION We discussed the kinds of people who would be involved – the captain, stewardess, hi-jackers, passengers. As passengers: – *Where are you going?* – *What are you like?* – *Are you young, old, on a business trip, a vacation, used to flying, etc.?*	Working to achieve credibility, the teacher helps the children by questioning and leads them to think more deeply about their roles in the drama.
Everyone worked simultaneously in pairs to exchange information i.e. *Talk with your partner in your roles as fellow passengers – what can you find out about one another?*	
We then sat in a circle and I asked students to introduce their partner to the whole group.	Introductions as a technique to share information with whole group.
Now I wanted the children to consider how they would introduce and handle the element of violence. We discussed how people react to a person with a gun and discussed the often sensational and unconvincing reactions seen on television.	
We now went into pair work to show the build-up to a moment (not necessarily involving a hi-jack) when a gun is produced – and the reactions of the threatened person. We wanted to get a credible reaction from ordinary people – not flashy heroics.	Pair work improvisations working for credibility.
Show the moment when the gun is produced and the gun-man has the upper hand. Why is he or she using a gun? What does he want to achieve or get? What is in the past of that person that has brought him or her here?	The teacher uses a variety of ways to get the students to look beneath the surface events e.g. discussion and improvisation in response to probing questions.
The group worked out their pair improvisations simultaneously – and I went round asking questions as they tried to make the scenes credible.	
We stopped to discuss motives that might push someone into using a gun – political or religious ideals, emotional reasons, lust for money or power, etc.	

Example no. 6 *cont'd*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
Now we began larger group improvisations increasing the number of gun-men to two and the victims to five or six people.	Teacher increases group size – more effort needed to co-operate with peers to work out an idea.
3rd SESSION In this session we tried to put a number of ideas together to sequence the drama. 1. *What goes on in an air terminal?* This time we had to agree on maintaining a role for the whole session. Air terminal personnel became aircraft personnel in later scenes, and passengers held to the same roles throughout. *When is it time to board and how do we know?* 2. *What goes on when you board?* We then ran through a take-off and moments of normal flying. *How might the hi-jackers make their first move? What would their instructions be to the passengers and crew?*	Teacher helps the students to develop credible sequences of scenes – and the questions asked highlight crucial moments in the drama and the need to co-ordinate actions.
We stopped and discussed what worked and what didn't work, and ran the sequence aboard the aircraft through again, working firstly for credibility and to establish the usual routine, then to make the hi-jackers' action effective but not sensational.	Constant reflection and evaluation by the students guided by the teacher.
After a couple of trials we wondered about how to continue our sequence. Several students reminded the group that we had originally decided on a plane crash too. We decided then that there would be a crash, and:	Refining what is being developed.
– that the pilot would be injured; – that some passengers would survive; – that the hi-jackers would be killed – some argued that they would shoot themselves in panic, but this suggestion was thrown out by the rest.	The students have to discuss, make an agreement and hold to it, to take the drama further.

Example no. 6 *cont'd*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
We went back to the in-flight improvisation and worked out answers to: – *How will we know when we are about to crash?* – *What will be the cue for us to know the moment?* We trialled the crash-landing and re-trialled the whole sequence. We then had a heated discussion about the credibility of what we had done. The motives and background of the hi-jackers were discussed at some length. At the end of the session I asked: – *How shall we end this drama? Do you want a solution or shall we freeze – stop the action?* They decided to continue in the next session with a drama about the survivors.	Working to a climax, with particular attention to the moments that lead up to it.

7. **Drama for a lower secondary grade** – *from a drama game, 'Join in the activity' (see page 23) with a group who had had little drama experience*

The teacher wanted to build up an understanding of generous play, as they co-operated with one another, and also to improve the students' ability to pick up clues and act upon them.

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
1st SESSION We stood in a big circle around the activities area and I asked the students to watch and to join in one at a time when they felt they could do so. I went into the centre of the area and began to mime washing dishes. A student came in and asked, *Want me to help?* I answered *Yes, dear – got to get these done before teatime – Dad'll be home soon.* The student then had some ideas about where we were, who we were and what we were doing. As the conversation developed another student entered, *Hullo, Mum – what's for tea?* Mum *Put your bag down and I'll see! Did Jim come home with you? His Mum said he might* (creating the possibility for another student to come into	Without lengthy discussions the teacher helps the children to learn and use the rules of the game.

Example no. 7 *cont'd*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
the game). When five students had joined me, I stopped the activity and we talked about how we knew **where** we were, **who** we might be, **what** I was doing, **when** it was, and how we had all built up the scene by adding and using information and clues given by one another.	Discussion to make the game and its purposes clear.
We divided into three groups. Before we began to work, I asked the students not only to find a way into the drama but out of it as well – that is, some way that fitted the context of the drama. Being in three groups now, all the students were involved. While they worked I went from group to group to help them if necessary.	Students now operate the game themselves – teacher is monitoring progress and giving help.
One scene developed as follows: Student A to student B: *Where did you put the nails, Dad?* Student B *(coming into the circle realising he must respond as Dad but not yet sure just where the scene is taking place, may respond guardedly): Dunno son – may have left them on the table.* A – son: *Can't find them Dad – perhaps you should look in your pocket – you had them before you came inside to watch the cricket.* B – Dad *(picks up clue that he is watching TV; puts his hand in his pocket and –): O.K. here you are son – gee, look at that catch! – just a minute and I'll come and help you with that fence.* A – son *(picks up the clue that he is making a fence and uses it even though it may conflict with his idea of what the nails are being used for): O.K. Dad – he's out! Look at that! Oh – end of play.* B – Dad: *Right son! Got to get that job done before that dog does any more damage!* A – Son *(picks up clue that fence is to restrain a dog; he decides to 'own' the dog): Well he's just a pup Dad – I guess he'll learn not to dig up Mum's vegies.* B – Dad *(picks up clue about Mum and her vegies, and the dog belonging to 'his son'): Well, you'll have to find out about those obedience classes Mr Smith told us about, or your Mum won't let you keep him,* etc. C *(enters as Mum): What's this I hear about me and that dog?*	This transcript shows how the students pick up the clues from one another and modify their own ideas where necessary.

Example no. 7 *cont'd*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
From these beginnings a family scene developed with neighbour coming in, relations arriving on a visit, delivery men calling. They all then found a way out of the scene except 'Dad' who went back to watch television.	
2nd SESSION In the second session, we began by discussing various places where a number of people could gather, such as an airport – and who would gather there; a market – and the people who would be found there; a disco; a clearing in the forest, etc.	Discussion to expand the ideas used previously.
We began by standing in a circle and I asked the students to accept the idea that this place is a garden, *Where is it? What kind of garden? What does it look like?* They chose a public garden. I asked one student to go in and begin an activity to which another person could respond. Again, we built up a scene and I asked them to find a way out of the drama, e.g. *Goodbye, Marg, I'll have to get back home now, or Brian will begin to worry* or *I must dash, the bus is due in five minutes!* or *Pack up the basket now you kids, we've got to go soon* or *The rain won't hold off much longer, so better hurry now!*	Teacher uses a constraint and a common 'base' – (idea of garden) to get the students to think out the possibilities in the situation.
After the activity, we talked about what might have developed out of our scene.	Discussion helps to make learning explicit.
I then asked them to divide into three groups and take the location as a garden – but to decide first what kind of a garden it might be.	The idea is taken further in order to develop the drama more fully, i.e. to develop an event.
The three groups then decided upon their gardens: 1. a back garden with a high wall and a gate onto a narrow lane; 2. a market garden at Richmond, Tasmania, growing peas, potatoes, carrots, beans and some berry fruits; 3. a roof garden in a busy city on top of a block of flats.	

Example no. 7 *cont'd*

Activity	Teaching procedures and techniques
I watched the students begin their dramas and in one group I had to urge students to start the activity as the group was allowing the discussion to go beyond simply setting the locality i.e. deciding on the kind of garden.	
The market garden drama developed an interesting focus around a mysterious blight on the potato crop. When the three activities ended, i.e. when all the characters found their way out of the activity, we sat down as a total group to tell each other about our dramas and to discuss the work we had done. Some points raised were: • the difficulties of working together; • how the locality we chose affected our choices of activity and characters; • the development of events, in particular the development of the event in the market garden, in connection with the mysterious blight, and how such an event might be developed and resolved.	The drama develops a specific focus for an event which will allow tension and a climax to develop. Discussion covers both the content of the dramas and difficulties of co-operation.
I then asked each group to develop a market garden scene (first deciding on the details of the location) using the idea of a mysterious plant disease and finding a way to resolve the problem. The three groups discussed, tried out a bit of the scene, discussed it again, took it a bit further until they agreed upon a resolution and set about developing and repeating the whole scene.	The discussion and chosen event become the focus for the next activity. Each group has the task of resolving the 'problem' or event developed by one group in the previous activity. This calls for discussion, recall, repeating and polishing the drama.
In the last few minutes we sat down and talked about the dramas we had developed, how we introduced the problem i.e. what happened at the beginning of the scene, who discovered the disease – or how was the idea introduced – what happened next, and how the problem was resolved – or how the scene ended. We discussed problems we had as characters within the activity and as class members working with one another.	Further discussion clarifies the activity and the group are gaining some insight into scene construction.

SECTION 5
OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Building safeguards into drama

The simulated reality and the role adopted by each person are the main ingredients of the framework to which each person brings as much or as little of their personal experience, personality and feelings as they choose. These and imagined or observed characteristics are the raw materials of drama. The framework of the fictitious situation and character becomes in fact a device which protects each person from excessive, hurtful or embarrassing exposure of deeply personal emotions and experiences. A student may use or refer to these personal experiences while he is in role, yet the fact that he is not portraying himself gives him the freedom and safety to imply that these are imaginary experiences and as such a legitimate part of the drama.

It is easy to see how the distinction between the real and the simulated becomes blurred and that occasionally in deeply felt moments students may reveal more of their real feelings than they had intended.

Occasionally drama, particularly with adolescents may involve taking some risks, because drama, by its nature demands total involvement, that is emotional as well as intellectual and physical involvement. Therefore teachers need to be alert to deal with an occasional over-emotional or tense situation and to be aware of the dangers of using potentially explosive material. If the material is very close to the participants e.g. a social issue or relationship in which members of the group are deeply and emotionally involved, it would be unwise to tackle such material directly. The participants need to have a comfortable **distance** between themselves and the material used, to ensure adequate protection for feelings and to encourage a more thoughtful view of the material. It might be sensible to 'translate' the social issue or relationship problem into another time or place.

It is part of the teacher's responsibility in drama to explain the 'rules of the game' clearly. It is important that all participants:

- understand that they are involved in drama, which means simulation i.e. behaving as if the situation were real, yet knowing quite clearly that it is contrived;
- understand the context or situation e.g. some details about **where we are, when,** or **who we are** in the drama;
- understand that they are to enter the activity in the role of some imagined person or character, and not as themselves, although they may use aspects of their own personalities, physical attitudes and experiences to 'flesh out' their roles. (With young children, taking a role will usually mean adopting externals such as tasks, interests or using objects e.g. a box to be a treasure chest, which they feel are consistent with the role they have chosen. Young children are unlikely to adopt the subtler aspects of personality or character, so in this sense they remain themselves within the drama.)

DRAMA SHOULD NEVER BE BASED ON A DECEPTION

The fact that the children and the teacher are to be involved in drama, and that this means acting and reacting within the limits of a 'pretend' situation must be clearly understood, so that no one is deceived into believing that a situation is real when in fact it is not, or that a real situation is drama, when it is not. Drama involves an agreement between people to act and behave as if the situation were real. If, for instance, actors are introduced in character and the children or students are expected to interact with them without being told that the characters are 'not real' this is deception and not drama, and as such is professionally and morally indefensible. (A useful reference which extends this point is an article 'Dangerous Drama?' by Paul Stevenson in the NADIE journal December 1977, vol. 2, no. 2).

The importance of discussion

Another most important responsibility of teachers is to give the children opportunities to reflect upon what they are doing and have done and to discuss how they feel about it, within a sympathetic and supportive atmosphere in which they can voice opinions and concerns knowing that the teacher and fellow class members will listen and consider seriously what they have to say.

With young children the discussion during and after the drama is a most important opportunity for learning as they discuss not only what happened and their feelings about it, but also:

What might have happened if . . .? *What might happen next?*

During such discussions the teacher also asks questions which will open up further thinking and reflection, speculation and discussion. In this way, the children's learning is made more explicit and they begin to see other connections and implications of their actions, decisions and choices. Such reflection and discussion also give opportunities to deal tactfully and calmly with any tension or aggression between members of the group in such a way as to defuse the situation. Fortunately, these kinds of difficulties seldom arise and when they do are more likely at secondary than at primary level.

Sharing, showing and performance

Teachers sometimes feel that showing what the children have done to the rest of the class is automatically part of a drama lesson. This is not a necessary part of all drama lessons, in fact, it can often be counter-productive especially if the children's work is at an early exploratory stage. As children work they play with and explore various ideas, selecting some and rejecting others. Gradually as they work their selection becomes more purposeful and they begin to shape or organise their ideas. This is the beginning of using and understanding dramatic form.

> *Appreciation of form does not, however, guarantee the quality of the meaning represented. There is a danger in encouraging children to produce an end-product. It may inhibit the natural development of the work and often forces children to cut short exploration and prematurely find forms of expression which can result in work of a superficial nature.* [8]

When children are involved in a drama session they are, as it were, watching themselves reacting to and with the others in the group, adjusting and extending their ideas, playing together in a tentative way. When showing work to others their focus shifts from watching themselves and monitoring their own actions to communicating to others.

Where children have developed a commitment to their work, where it is thoughtful and they are beginning to organise their ideas, showing or sharing work informally with their peers may be of some benefit if the group are eager to let others see what they have done, particularly if they wish to find out if onlookers get the same meanings from their work that they intend to convey. The shift in emphasis to communicating ideas to others, involves further learning processes; these are:

- recall – being able to remember and repeat a sequence;
- communication skills – being able to use the voice and body to convey meaning clearly;
- shaping ideas and using aspects of dramatic form to highlight meaning.

Sharing and showing work should only be suggested when the children's work has attained a level of thoughtfulness and commitment, when ideas have been explored and extended and when some thought has been given to the meaning the group wishes to convey to others. Showing work should never be forced on those who are reluctant or nervous of doing so. Where work is constantly prepared for showing, or when drama is sporadically undertaken only to show it at an assembly or school concert, the work will attain little depth of thought or feeling and may become superficial and glib with no worthwhile consideration being given to meaning.

Performances

From time to time children who have been working on a particular project may wish to show it to another class or even to their parents at an informal 'open day' type of occasion. The children and the small informal audience may derive a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction from this shared experience.

However, formal 'theatre', that is, a performance which employs elements of the theatre arts such as the projection of voice and character to larger than life dimensions, lighting, a stage (with the action having to be re-shaped to accommodate the audience's view), scenery and costumes, is a sophisticated art form beyond the capacities of most children in the infant, primary and lower secondary grades.

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[8] McGregor, Lynn et al. *Learning through Drama:* Report of Schools Council Drama Teaching Project (10-16) Heinemann Educational Books, 1978. p. 30

Other Considerations

It is difficult to justify the strains and stress which formal performances place upon children, also it is important that occasions on which children show their work to others are not conducted under competitive conditions which tend to inhibit the development of more generous-spirited, considerate and responsible attitudes toward others.

'Competition, particularly in the arts, cuts people off from each other, prevents ideas from being explored, and creates an atmosphere of distrust.' [9]

Scripted drama

Students with a background of on-going experience in drama activities, which they and their teacher create, will bring greater awareness and understanding to scripted drama when it is introduced in the upper secondary school. At this level they can cope with and often become very competent in various aspects of stagecraft. Introduced too soon, before they have had time to develop ideas slowly through improvised drama activities, the script can become stifling and unproductive because the implications of the script and the possible meanings that lie behind the dialogue and events escape them. Attempts to impose scripted drama and formal performance too soon, often lead to the children learning a few superficial 'theatrical' tricks with no regard for the meaning they are supposed to be communicating.

As they work through their ideas in spontaneous and improvised situations within the drama activities which they and their teachers devise, they become aware of the need to make meaning clear and explicit to communicate it to others; they perceive a purpose for sharing work with others.

Humour and 'send-ups'

To communicate humour to an audience, even to peers in an informal situation, demands sophisticated skills of timing and control which are beyond most children. Yet they enjoy clowning, finding ways to make people laugh, and talking about what they and others consider to be funny.

The teacher however, needs to be able to distinguish between humour that arises spontaneously as children work with one another within the drama situation, and humour which is more in the nature of stereotyped 'send-ups' or showing off. Older children sometimes retreat behind a flippant or slapstick humour to cover their embarrassment or inadequacy; sometimes this attitude is the result of their erroneous expectations about drama. It may also be due to modelling on television skits and banal comedies.

When drama is conducted in such a way that showing work to the rest of the class is a regular

[9] King, Nancy *Giving Form to Feeling*, N.Y. Drama Book Specialists, 1975. p. 67

and expected part of each session, this shallow and unthinking approach is encouraged and these attitudes often remain unchallenged. It is essential that children should have opportunities to work towards a greater degree of commitment in drama experiences with a definite purpose and focus and not left to drift along 'making up plays' about anything they like and showing them to others. The emphasis in such structured drama experiences should be to develop meaning and work towards credibility within the drama itself before any attempt is made to communicate meaning to those outside the drama.

One teacher wrote:
A scene between two children in role as a boy and the next door neighbour developed into slapstick comedy, cheeky, silly and unrealistic, as the boy told the neighbour that his friend was stuck on the neighbour's roof, trying to retrieve his lost ball. We stopped the play, and discussed the boy's motives for approaching the neighbour – 'What does he want? What is the best way of getting this?' *The class then worked in pairs to develop this moment, the scenes were shared and discussed, then the original improvisation was taken up again and the credibility of this particular moment was much improved.*

When wanting to communicate genuine humour to others outside the drama, students will need to realise how humour changes when it is shared with an audience: they will need to try out and discuss various kinds of humour, what it is that makes people laugh, and begin to analyse humourous situations and the skills needed to communicate humour to an audience.

A purpose for sharing
When sharing work within a class, the teacher needs to suggest a focus for attention i.e. a purpose for watching other's work. For example, the children might be asked to focus upon a particular aspect of meaning, such as:
- *what can you find out about these people in this play?*
- *what can you find out about the place where this play happens, or where these people live?*

When the children are beginning to work more purposefully toward finding a form, questions such as the following might be useful:
- *what is the most important moment in the play?* (or *the most exciting, the funniest, etc.) and why? how do the people in the play make it important, funny, exciting?*

It is essential that the showing of work and subsequent discussion be conducted in a constructive, supportive way, and that it does not degenerate into negative criticism, such as:
- *he forgot to pick up the basket*
- *I didn't like the way Maree did the old lady*, etc.
- *it didn't look as if he were opening a door*

During the discussion, questions such as the following often help to keep the discussion centered on the meaning and form of the play, rather than on the children who are taking part:

- *What might have happened to the people in the play* before *the play began?*
- *What might happen to them* after *the play ends?*
- *How might these people deal with a particular problem?*
- *What might have happened* if *(i.e. if the play had taken place in a city, on a farm, a long time ago; or if an alternative plan had been agreed upon, etc.)*
- *What do you think a character felt like when he or she said or did . . . ?*
- *What sort of feeling did the play give you? (i.e. what sort of atmosphere was created – how were you affected by the atmosphere?)*

All these suggestions would need to be used with understanding and sensitivity by the teacher, and adapted to the children's level of understanding and experience.

The audience in role

Another way of providing a focus for older children watching a piece of work done by their peers, is to ask the children to watch as newspaper or television observers or reporters, who are going to write up what they have seen and heard, film it, or make a program about it. This idea will depend very much on the type of work being carried out. Similar ideas might include:

- The 'audience' become observers of a documentary film (i.e. of the drama being shown) – how much are they able to discover about the people being depicted? The teacher could adopt the role as the film director showing the first 'film clips' and getting reactions from the audience.
- A drama with some historical setting e.g. about the gold rush, early settlers, etc. could be viewed by the 'audience' in the role of travellers who have gone back in time. After the drama is over the time-travellers might interview the characters and question them further.
- Some dramas might trigger off interviews involving other people and agencies (members of the audience) e.g. a shipwreck; after seeing the play, children adopt roles such as rescuers who help various characters and question them about events that led up to the shipwreck, where the vessel was bound for, why they were travelling etc.

Communicating ideas to others

This is how one teacher approached the task of helping lower secondary students to prepare work which they were going to share with one another. She wrote:

> *Sometimes the playmaking is for the group alone and only has to make sense to the people taking part. There is no sharing or external audience; the play is 'internalised' in the way*

that there are implicit understandings and agreements about the story and the action, i.e. a lot can be left unsaid. This sort of play is only for the people in it; it would not make sense to an audience. Sometimes however, the play is for sharing and then the students need help to 'externalise' the story, characters and motives. I find it useful to think of this development in three stages:

- *The 'scribble stage' – they try out, discard, try out other ideas – then perhaps leave it at that.*
- *The 'building' stage – they try out ideas, refine them, and 'deepen' the meaning as their commitment grows. They seem to be expanding the meaning for themselves. During this stage, they are likely to move away from initial stereotypes and clichéd situations towards credibility, but they need the teacher's help to do this.*
- *The 'communicating' stage – this involves a growing awareness of what others outside the play would need to see and hear in order to understand it. In this too, the teacher's help is vital. This leads to using and understanding aspects of dramatic form.*

During this third stage we focus on the areas of the story that are not clear. We try out ideas, we stop and talk, and try out other ideas. We work on those grey, misty passages that do not yet make much sense to outsiders. During this the students and I consciously 'look in' on the play we are making.

With one class, a moment of fear they were trying to portray in groups, was just not working. We stopped the plays and began a short whole class improvisation to try and deepen our understanding of fear and our reactions to it. I opened up an imaginary box which contained something that repulsed the students, who slowly and fearfully backed away. Then I suggested that the repulsion focus had shifted to their feet, to the ceiling above them, to their neighbour. We then returned to our plays and it seemed that these 'grey moments' were more credible.

Working towards clear communication

Another example of working for clarity of communication is given below, in which, work (developed from the question framework using a chair as the focus, see page 23) was refined for showing to fellow class members.

As the groups worked to build up their scenes, the teacher moved from group to group helping the students:

- to develop their ideas
- to strive for credibility
- to find an ending or solution.

The teacher wanted the students to focus on aspects of form and communication to others.

NOTE: In this particular scene the participants decided that the customer and bank manager had known each other for years, lived in the same town and played cricket together.

The teacher therefore asked the students to consider the following questions:

- *Would the meaning be clear to anyone watching your scene?*
  – for example: *how can you show this is a bank? / he is a bank manager? / he is a customer? / they play cricket? / he is after a loan? / they know each other well?* etc.
- *Has your scene a clear beginning and ending?*
- *What is the most important moment in the scene?*
- *How do you work up to it and away from it?*

The students worked on their scenes again to improve them, with the teacher's help.

The students viewed each other's scenes **in role as detectives** – *We will watch your scene as detectives and tell you at the end all we have found out about you* (the characters in the play) *and your story. If we are wrong we'll ask you to re-run your scene adding more information to help us.*

For example, one scene depicted a battle on a ship. Three different interpretations were given by the detective-audience:

- pirates being attacked by other pirates
- travellers being attacked by pirates
- shooting down a plane in World War II.

The group went away and quickly discussed and adjusted the scene adding dialogue and action that set it firmly in time and place. They were travellers on board a sailing ship being attacked by pirates early in the nineteenth century.

APPRAISAL

Drama operates at both the real and symbolic level and therefore when making an appraisal of a drama experience the teacher needs to be aware of learning that occurs within the social situation and relationships of the group activity as well as the learning that occurs at a symbolic level, that is, the deeper meanings that arise as the simulated reality of the drama is explored.

Appraisal or evaluation involves asking ourselves, *What kinds of learning have taken place through this particular drama experience?*

When asking this question it may be useful to consider the children's gains, progress and involvement under four headings:

1. Social and personal learning – relationships, group cohesion, attitudes within the group, etc.

2. Communication and drama skills – the children's ability to use language, movement and gesture, and to react imaginatively and thoughtfully within the 'pretend' situation of the drama.
3. Learning and understanding that comes from involvement with and reflection upon the context of the drama, i.e. the meanings, ideas, issues, attitudes and themes that are chosen to be explored.
4. Statements made through dramatic form; the 'products' of the drama process, described by Lynn McGregor as:

> *. . . moments of arrival – moments when the group has new perceptions, reaches conclusions, makes statements . . . In struggling with different forms of expression the group may reach a statement which they find completely satisfying. This is a moment of arrival in drama – a point when there is inherent pleasure in the form itself, in 'saying it this way' . . . a moment when context and form have become indivisible.*[10]

Appraising our own teaching methods

Besides appraising the children's learning the teacher needs to assess the planned structure underlying each session, that is the procedures and techniques used as well as the material and meaning that were explored. It is essential that the teacher's methods do not become rigid and unchanging and that techniques of various kinds are not employed so often that they become predictable and boring. Consideration of the criteria in section one, together with suggestions in this section should enable the teacher to compile an appraisal list appropriate to the specific objectives of each drama session. A further list of useful questions for teachers to ask themselves in attempting to assess their work is to be found in *Drama Guidelines* by Cecily O'Neill et al. [11]

NOTE: A most useful reference when working out methods of appraisal or evaluation in drama, is Robert Stake's *Evaluating the Arts in Education;* a responsive approach, Columbus, Ohio, Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1975.

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[10] McGregor, Lynn et al. *Learning through Drama*, pp. 90-91

[11] O'Neill, Cecily et al. *Drama Guidelines*, Heinemann Educational Books, 1976. p. 18

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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